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Why Smith Left Home

H. BROADHURST

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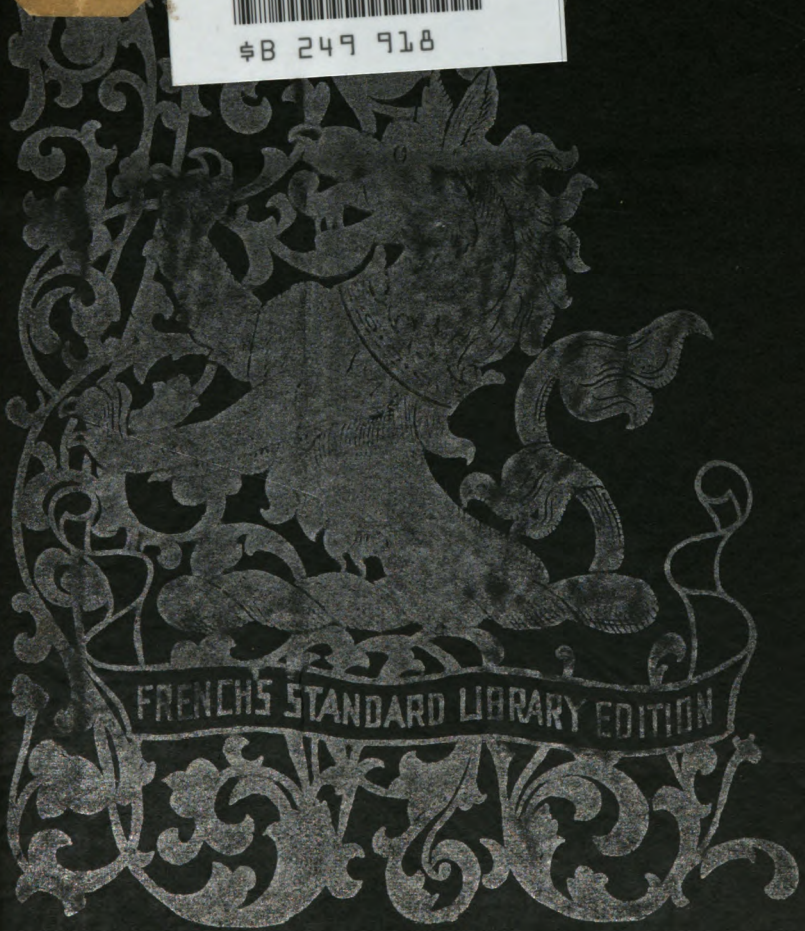

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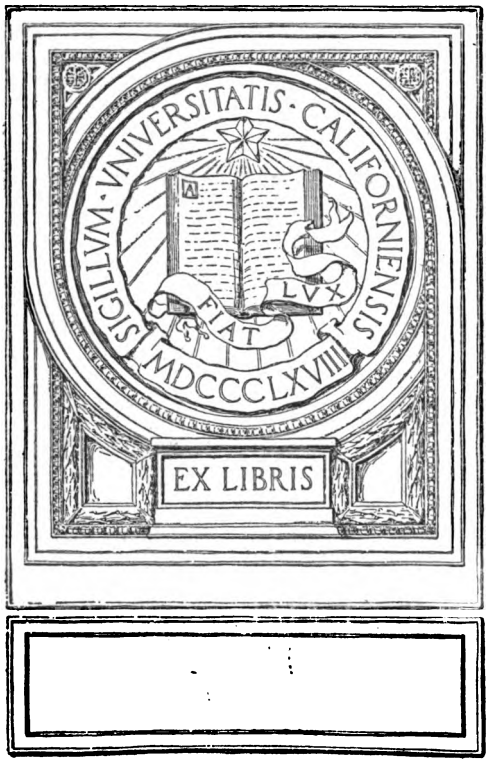

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WHY SMITH LEFT HOME

An Original Farce in Three Acts

BY

GEORGE H. BROADHURST

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

JOHN SMITH..*Who loves his wife and lives in New York*
GEN. BILLETDOUX.....*His wife's second husband*
COUNT VON GUGGENHEIM..*Who made them twisted*
MAJOR DUNCOMBE....*With memories of last night*
ROBERT WALTON.....MRS. SMITH'S *brother*
MRS. JOHN SMITH..*Who loves her husband, no matter where he lives*
MISS SMITH.....*A lady in waiting*
MRS. BILLETDOUX.....MRS. SMITH'S *aunt*
ROSE WALTON.....ROBERT'S *bride of a day*
JULIA.....*Touchingly clever*
ELSIE.....*A maid*
LAVINIA DALY.....*Who is a lady and knows it*

PLACE.—*Home of* JOHN SMITH.

TIME.—*Present.*

ACT 1st. *Morning.*

ACT 2nd. *Afternoon.*

ACT 3rd. *Evening.*

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PROPERTIES.

Telegram in sealed telegraph envelope.
Silver salver.
Two tap bells.
One large hall bell.
Cake (Wood) one large piece, two slices.
Plate (China) for cake.
Card case.
Visiting cards with tissue paper.
Newspaper.
Large extra long bread knife.
Prop. money marked $100.—C.
Small personal check book.
Tray cloths.
Napkins.
Two sets salts and peppers.
Three knives.
Three forks.
Three large tablespoons.
Five plates.
Two glasses.
Cigar.
Large long "horse" pistol with loud double cock action hammer.
Four books.
Red mask.
Crown.
Two large stars for hair.
Envelope with letter enclosed addressed to MRS. SMITH.
Envelope with notice enclosed for LAVINIA.

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COSTUMES.

SMITH. Act I. Light business suit. Act II. Dark business suit. Act III. Evening dress and overcoat.

GEN. B. Act I. Light check sack suit. Act II. Frock coat, light trousers. Act III. Evening dress.

COUNT. Act II. Light suit. Act III. Evening dress.

MAJOR. Act I. Frock coat, light trousers. Act II. Same. Act III. Evening dress.

BOB. Act I. Military undress or fatigue coat and duck trousers. Act II. Same. Act III. Evening dress.

MRS. S. Act I. Morning gown. Act II. Afternoon gown. Act III. Evening gown and handsome wrap. Fancy costume, very Frenchy.

MISS S. Act I. Morning gown. Act II. Afternoon gown. Act III. Evening gown.

MRS. B. Act I. Traveling dress. Act II. Afternoon gown. Act III. Evening gown and handsome wrap. Masquerade dress same as Julia's.

ROSE. Act I. Traveling dress. Act II. Afternoon dress. Act III. Evening dress and Masquerade dress.

JULIA. Act. I. Maid's dress, black. Handsome gown given her by Mrs. Smith. Act II. Maid's dress, black. Act III. Same. Also Masquerade dress same as Mrs. Billetdoux.

ELSIE. Act I. Maid's dress. Gray. Act II. Same. Act III. Same. Also Masquerade dress.

LAVINIA. Act I. Plain gingham of eccentric pattern with deep starched collar and green tie. Act II. Same. Act III. Same. Also Masquerade dress representing royal robe of state. Cloak and train, etc.

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CHARACTERS.

SMITH. *Prosperous American business man of about forty. Good humored.*

GEN. B. *Dapper little Frenchman of about fifty. Gallic in manner, precise in dress.*

COUNT VON G. *German, about thirty-five. Very nervous in actions and intense in speech and manner.*

MAJOR D. *Gruff old soldier of fifty-five.*

BOB. *Youngster of twenty-one. Boyish in appearance and manner.*

MRS. S. *Handsome young woman of twenty-five.*

MISS S. *A maiden lady of forty-two. Don't make her a caricature.*

MRS. B. *Portly woman of fifty. Overbearing in manner.*

ROSE. *Good-looking girl of about twenty.*

JULIA. *Handsome girl of twenty-two. Demure of speech and manner. Uses her eyes effectively.*

ELSIE. *About twenty. Somewhat pert.*

LAVINIA. *An Irishwoman of about thirty-five. Dialogue will indicate her characteristics.*

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"WHY SMITH LEFT HOME."

ACT I.

SCENE:—*Music at rise. Lively. A room handsomely furnished, in the home of* JOHN SMITH. *At rise of curtain,* MRS. SMITH *enters* R. 3 *with photograph album in her hand, places it on table up* C., *sits right of table looking at photograph album.*

MRS. S. Here it is.

(*Enter* MISS SMITH L. 2.)

MISS S. (L. C.) Ah! You said that he wouldn't, I knew he would. The Major—he proposed last night.

MRS. S. (*sitting* C. R.) An offer of marriage doesn't come every day to a woman of your age.

MISS S. My age, indeed! Because your young face attracted the attention of my brother, and you were *lucky* enough to *catch* him. (*Down* L.)

MRS. S. (C. *rising*) Lucky! Catch! To hear you talk one would think I lured your brother into marrying me. (*Coming down stage* C.) Instead of which I refused him three times, as you very well know.

MISS S. (L., *goes to* MRS. SMITH) Only to accept him the fourth because he secured a contract for a government building, and so was sure to make another million.

MRS. S. Do you intimate that I married my husband for money?

MISS SMITH. (C.) Do you insinuate that you married him for love? You may be able to make him believe that, but me—Oh no! My brother isn't exactly handsome.

MRS. S. (C.) True. Beauty doesn't run in your family.

MISS S. (L.) He is not very young.

MRS. S. True again. Though beauty doesn't, age does.

MISS S. (L.) You think because I am thirty-two——!

MRS. S. Forty-two.

MISS S. (L. *cor.*) Thirty-two.

MRS. S. Forty-two.

(*Going to table* C. *for album.*)

This is the family album.

(*Coming down to* MISS S. *back of table.*)

I found it this morning, and was prepared for the emergency. (*Pointing to record in album.*)

MISS S. (L. C. *pointing to album*) That figure is false.

MRS. S. If it is, it's not the only false figure about you. (*Closing album and returning to table up* C.)

MISS S. You imagine I cannot inspire devotion because I am no longer a child——!

MRS. S. (R.) (*Coming down* R.) "Child" is good.

MISS S. (L. C.) But, did you notice how the Count Von Guggenheim stared at me on the street yesterday afternoon?

MRS. S. (*At chair* R.) Stared! At you! (*laughs*) Now that is really funny.

MISS S. Funny!

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MRS. S. Yes, you forget *I* was with you.
MISS S. Do you mean to say he was looking at you?
MRS. S. (C.) Stranger things have happened.
MISS S. *You* may think he was. I know better.
MRS. S. (R.) And I would not undeceive you for the world.

(MRS. S. *crosses to* C.)

(MRS. *and* MISS SMITH *ad lib. until* SMITH'S *entrance.*)

SMITH. (*Outside*) At it again.

(*Enter* SMITH R. 3, *both go to meet him.*)

MISS S. Your wife } has been saying
MRS. S. Your sister } that I——!
SMITH. (C.) Stop it, stop it!

(MRS. *and* MISS S. *stop.*)

(*Coming down stage* C.)

I know which is wrong.
MRS. S. and MISS S. Which?

(*Both ladies point at each other.*)

SMITH. Both.

(*An indignant look from both of the ladies.* MRS. S. *goes to piano* R. *and* MISS S. *to* L.)

What's the fuss about anyway? Is it simply the four hundred and thirteenth chapter of the old one, or the beginning of another?

(*Turn* R., *looking at* MRS. S.)

MISS S. (L. C.) I came here to tell your wife that the Major proposed to me last night, and——

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(MISS S. *makes gesture, extending* R. *hand.*)

SMITH. (C. *Turn quickly, catch* MISS S. *hand —shake*) At last, at last! (*Back to* C.) I'd begun to think I'd sacrificed a month's comfort for nothing.

MISS S. (L. C.) What do you mean?

SMITH. (C.) Why do you suppose I invited the Major to spend this month here? Because I was yearning for his society? Not much. I wanted to give you one long, last lingering farewell chance at him.

MISS S. (L. C.) Chance at him!

SMITH. (C.) Exactly. He'd never have joined the army if you hadn't refused him twenty years ago.

MRS. S. (*coming to back of arm-chair* R.) Yes. Twenty years ago when you were only twelve years old! Oh, I don't know. (*Putting hand to face, looking through fingers.*)

SMITH. (C.) And as I thought he might still be foolish enough to——!

MISS S. (C. L.) Then it was a deliberate *plan* to get rid of *me?*

SMITH. (C.) Not so much that as a plan to get a few days' peace and quiet in my own home with my own wife. (MRS. S. *crosses* C. *to* SMITH, *they embrace*) We have been married for six months, I couldn't go on a honeymoon because of business, and I'll be hanged if somebody hasn't been camping out here since the day of the wedding.

(MRS. S. *sits in arm chair* R.)

MISS S. (L. C.) I'll see that I don't "camp out" here much longer. (*going to door* L.)

SMITH. (C. *crossing to chair* R.) I don't want to hurry you, Juliette. This is Saturday. Now,

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when the Major asks you to name the day, if you'll say next Monday——!

MISS S. (*crosses* L.) I'll go. I'll go. But perhaps the knowledge of this little scheme may have an effect you did not count on. I did *not* accept the Major but agreed to give him his answer to-day. I intended to say "yes," now I shall probably say

(*Exit* MISS SMITH L. 1, *slams door.*)

MRS. S. (*rising*) If she should say "no."

SMITH. (*crosses to* MRS. S. *at chair* R.) Don't you worry about that. If the Major lives till she refuses him the second time, he'll be a gold mine for the life insurance companies.

(MRS. S. *sits in chair* R., SMITH *sits on arm of chair with arm around* MRS. SMITH'S *neck.*)

And do you know, my dear, I've always regretted not taking that honeymoon trip. If I hadn't had such unusually important contracts on hand, we certainly would have done so.

MRS. S. (R.) I know we would, you dear old fellow, so there, don't say anything more about it.

(SMITH *affectionately caresses* MRS. S.)

SMITH. We'll take a substitute for it some day, however, just as soon as business is dull enough, and it's getting quieter every day. We'll go next week if you say so?

MRS. S. No, John. When Juliette has gone, we'll have our home all to ourselves, and that is just what I've been longing for.

SMITH. I've been troubled with the same longing. Why can't people have some consideration? It seems to me that every relative of yours——!

MRS. S. (*warningly*) Ah, ah, ah!

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SMITH. And mine too—has put in an appearance here since we started housekeeping.

MRS. S. Not all of mine, John. Brother Bob and Aunt Mary at least haven't been here.

SMITH. That's so. Although I've never had the pleasure of meeting that brother of yours, I would make him welcome for your sake. But Aunt Mary! Aunt Mary! (SMITH *crossing to* C.) It only needs her presence to fill my cup of happiness to overflowing.

MRS. S. (*rising crosses to* SMITH L. C.) I'm so sorry you two can't get along together, I know she *is* a little aggressive, but remember how good she has been to Bob and me. She's taken care of us both since we were only so high (*making motion with hand*), and just think what Bob's education alone is costing her.

SMITH. (L. C.) I admire your aunt's good qualities, and am very grateful for all she has done for you, but her disposition and mine——! well, instead of fitting together so (*interlacing fingers*), they run against each other like this (*rapidly placing tips of thumbs and fingers together*). Now, when that is the case, the persons concerned had better keep apart or there'll be trouble.

MRS. S. (*crossing to arm chair* R.) I hope there'll never be any trouble between you two.

SMITH. (L. C.) I'm sure there won't—unless she comes here looking for it.

(ELSIE *enters* R. 3.)

ELSIE. Telegram for you, sir.

SMITH. (*taking telegram*) For me?

ELSIE. Yes, sir.

(ELSIE *exits* R. 3.)

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SMITH. All my messages should go to the office. (*tearing end of envelope and reading message*) Why, it's for you, dear. (*giving telegram to* MRS. SMITH.)

MRS. S. (*crosses* L.) Is it?

SMITH. (*up* R. C.) That girl has got to be more careful.

MRS. S. From whom can it be.

SMITH. (*up at door* R. 3.) Elsie! Elsie!

(ELSIE *appears at door,* SMITH *talks to her in dumb show.*)

MRS. S. (*reading*) "Will see you at twelve. Am coming with the General for a nice, long visit. Aunt Mary." Aunt Mary coming here with the General, and John in this frame of mind!

(ELSIE *exits* R. 3, *quick, jerkily.*)

SMITH. (R. *chair*) (*coming down and sitting in chair* R.) She won't do that again. Anything important, dear?

MRS. S. Oh no! no, indeed! it's from brother Bob. He says he has been chosen quarter back on the baseball team. (*conceals telegram in sleeve of dress*)

SMITH. Quarterback on the baseball team?

MRS. S. Yes.

SMITH. I suppose next year he'll be first base on the football team.

MRS. S. (*doubtfully*) Oh—yes——

SMITH. And he wires you about it?

MRS. S. (*crossing back of chair*) Yes, he always wires me about such matters. He knows how interested I am in his studies and things. (*Crosses back of chair.*) Very considerate of him, don't you think so, dear?

SMITH. Very. But as we were saying, a newly

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married couple ought to have their home completely to themselves. Eh, sweetheart?

MRS. S. (R.) Yes, John. Of course, as a general rule, but don't you think there could be an exception?

SMITH. Exception?

MRS. S. Just as a matter of argument, you know.

SMITH. (R.) No! This is the rule to which I can see *no* exception, especially in *our case,* and when Juliette has gone, we'll be just as happy as birds in the Springtime. Any man who couldn't be contented with a wife like you and a nice, quiet home ought to——!

(LAVINIA *outside* R. 1, *laughs loudly.* SMITH *listens with evident exasperation, then he looks at* MRS. S. *who has been watching him with symptoms of distress.*

(*Both rising and looking at each other.*)

SMITH. Who *is* that?

MRS. S. The new cook.

SMITH. Great Scott, another?

MRS. S. Yes, dear.

(SMITH *crosses back of chair ringing bell on table.* ELSIE *enters* R. 3. SMITH *crossing back to* C.)

SMITH. (R. C.) Tell that cook— (*to* MRS. SMITH) By the way, what's her name?

MRS. S. (R.) Lavinia, dear.

SMITH. (C. *to* ELSIE) You tell Lavinia, dear, to be a little more confidential with that laugh of hers. I don't like her voice.

(*Crossing to* MRS. S., R., ELSIE *exits* R. 3.)

As I was saying, my dear, we'll have our home all to ourselves and then——!

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LAVINIA (*outside* R.) He don't like me voice, eh? Well, you just tell him for me that if he don't like it, he'd better live in another part of the house.

SMITH. (*crossing* C.) I'd better live in another part of the house.

ELSIE *re-enters* R.)

ELSIE. She said that if you didn't like——!

SMITH. (R. C.) I know what she said.

(SMITH *motions* ELSIE *off—starts to rush off* R. 2. MRS. S. *intercepts him.* ELSIE *exits* R. 3.)

MRS. S. She was only joking. I could tell it by her tone.

SMITH. By her tone. All right, I'll go and apologize in a tone just like it.

(SMITH *starts again,* MRS. S. *stops him, placing both hands on his breast.*)

MRS. S. (R.) John—please, please let the matter drop as a favor to me.

SMITH. Yes, but I——!

MRS. S. I understand, dear. But she came only this morning, and hasn't got accustomed to our ways.

SMITH. (*crosses to* L. C.) Evidently she hasn't.

MRS. S. (R.) She comes most highly recommended, especially as a fancy cook, and this morning when I was in the kitchen (*crosses to small table at* R.) she was making what promised to be a most delicious cake (*taking the plate with the cake on it*) and here it is.

(*Crossing to* R. C. *showing* SMITH *the cake.*)

SMITH. (C.) That does look good.

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MRS. S. (R. C.) Try a piece.

SMITH. Oh, I hardly think I——!

MRS. S. Just one. You know how fond you are of it.

(SMITH *takes piece of cake.* MRS. S. *looks on smiling.* SMITH *tries to bite it, but fails. He looks at* MRS. SMITH *whose expression changes to one of dismay.*)

SMITH. Say, dearie, isn't there a little hammer goes with this? (SMITH *tries again. Same result. Then taps the plate with the piece of cake.*) If this is the work of a cook who comes highly recommended, please engage one who has a diploma for incompetency. Discharge her, my dear, discharge her.

(*Hands cake to* MRS. S. *Crosses and sits in chair* R. *of table.*)

MRS. S. (*passing behind chair, putting plate of cake on table*) If I did, I could not get another in town and I need one to-day especially.

(*Crosses to* C.)

SMITH. (L.) Why to-day more than any other?

MRS. S. (*going to* R. C.) Don't you see if Aunt ——! Well, I need one to-day, that's all.

SMITH. (*rising comes to* C.) But why to-day more than any other?

(MRS. SMITH *stands at chair* R., *facing* R., *back to* SMITH; *she takes telegram from sleeve, looks at it with an expression of comical dismay, looks at* SMITH, *turns away her head, then timidly hands it to* SMITH *with a backward motion.* SMITH *takes it between thumb and finger of* R. *hand and in a very gingerly manner.*)

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What has your quarterback brother to do with the cook?

MRS. S. (R. C.) It isn't from my brother.

SMITH. (*Reads, with an expression of great dismay, gasps, almost a scream, hard to breathe*) "Aunt Mary—General—long visit." (*Folds telegram, returns it to* MRS. S. *kisses her, starts abruptly for* C.) Good-bye.

MRS. S. (C.) Where are you going?

SMITH. (*up* L. 3, *turns*) I haven't decided whether it will be Goldfield or San Leandro.

MRS. S. Do be sensible.

SMITH. (*coming down* C. *excitedly*) So I got rid of my sister, only to have your aunt and her second husband swoop down on us, do I? But they shan't stay. I'll refuse to pay the gas bills and have the gas turned off. I'll go out and catch scarlet fever! I'll discharge all the servants, the maids, the cook——! Great Scott! Cook and mother-in-law the same day.

(*Sits at* R. *of table* L.)

MRS. S. (R.) But she is not your mother-in-law. She is my aunt.

(*Goes to piano; sits, doesn't play.*)

SMITH. She may be an aunt by nature, but she is a mother-in-law by instinct! Why, the cook alone is enough to make any man leave home.

(*Strikes table forcibly, sees cake; the idea of driving away Aunt Mary with the work of the cook strikes him.*)

By jove, there's an idea—Aunt Mary—the cook—I'll feed Aunt Mary—

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(*His expression changes to one of triumph. Rises. Goes up* C. *with a swagger air, then with assumed regret*)—

Marion, I've been wrong. I haven't looked at this affair in a sensible light. Perhaps your aunt and I can get along nicely after all.

MRS. S. (R. C. *doubtfully*) Yes?

SMITH. (*down* C. *Coming down to* MRS. S.) Yes—oh, yes!—now that I am calm. I see that it would be unkind of me to refuse to receive her. (*As he comes down, makes motion indicating cake on table.*)

MRS. S. (R. C.) But why this sudden change of heart?

SMITH. It isn't a change of heart. It's a change of—of—!

MRS. S. Plan?

SMITH. No, no, my dear. She has been so good to you that the slightest return I can make is to let her come and stay as long as she can stand it. (MRS. SMITH *looks at him*) I mean as long as she pleases.

MRS. S. Really?

SMITH. Really.

MRS. S. (R. C.) Thank you, John, thank you.

SMITH. Not at all, not at all. But about the cook. Some one must reason with her, and as I know you don't wish to do it, send her here to me.

MRS. S. (R. C.) Please don't say anything to offend her.

SMITH. (C.) I'll pour balm on her wounded feelings.

MRS. S. (*going* R.) I'm a little bit doubtful.

SMITH. (*following* MRS. S. *to* R) You needn't be, my dear.

(*Irish air pp.*)

MRS. S. Well, we'll see.

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(*Exit* MRS. S. R. 3, E.)

SMITH. (*sitting in chair* R.) Coming to pay a nice, long visit, are they? Well, I guess not, if this court knows itself, and it thinks it does.

(LAVINIA *entering* R. 2, *passes back of chair, touches* SMITH *on shoulder, goes* C. *and stands waiting.* SMITH *looks at her in astonishment.*)

Well, who *are you?*

(LAVINIA *reaches into her pocket, produces a handsome card case, takes out card, blows tissue paper from it, and hands card to* SMITH.)

LAVINIA. (R. C.) My card.

SMITH. (*taking card and reading*): "Lavinia Daly, secretary of the Cook Ladies' Union and Queen of the Housemaids' Society of Holland Dames."

LAVINIA. (C.) Yours truly. (*bowing*)

SMITH. (*rising, bowing to her*) Your Majesty. (*sits*) Let me get this straight—as I understand it. You are the cook.

LAVINIA. Cook lady, if you please. There is no longer any plain cooks.

SMITH. What I want to know is this: are you the individual who perpetrated that? (*pointing to cake*)

LAVINIA. (*looks at cake on table and back at* SMITH) I cooked it—if that's what you mean?

SMITH. Well, what is it?

LAVINIA. That is a piece of angel cake. Did you think it was an oyster stew?

SMITH. No, oh, no! I thought that perhaps it was a small oblong section of the new cement pavement they're laying outside.

LAVINIA. (*crosses* L.) Now, don't get gay! Don't

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get gay! If you do, I'll put the Cook Ladies' Union on to you. (*crossing* R.)

SMITH. The what?

LAVINIA. The Cook Ladies' Union! Oh, us cooks is organized and ready for a strike at any minute. (*crossing to* C.)

SMITH. Your strike wouldn't bother me. My wife could do her own cooking if she had to.

LAVINIA. And if she did, she would have to do everything else as well. The rest of the house workin' ladies wouldn't work with a scab.

SMITH. Scab!

LAVINIA. It's agin' the rules of the Union.

SMITH. But this is our own house.

LAVINIA. If we cook ladies can't win our strike we calls the other house-workin' ladies. If that don't settle it, we calls out the Ice Wagon Drivers' Brotherhood, and then when you're all sick from home-made cookin' and can't get no ice, we calls out the Society of Registered Drug Clerks; you can't get your prescriptions filled and we have you bloated capitalists cinched to a standstill. Only wait till we get started, we'll make things hum. (*goes* R.)

SMITH. (*crossing to table*) Yes, I should imagine you would. But listen to me.

(*Taking piece of cake from plate, on table* C., *meeting* LAVINIA C.)

This is pretty good, bad cooking, I admit, but what I want to know is, can you do bad cooking any worse?

LAVINIA. (R. C.) What are you drivin' at?

SMITH. (C.) Simply this. My wife's aunt begins an indefinite visit here to-day, but if you can only keep on like this, in three days she'll either

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die of dyspepsia or be compelled to leave the house. Do you catch the idea?

LAVINIA. (R. C.) Do I catch the idea? Do I catch? Well, I should say I do. And you couldn't get a better lady to help you if you searched the country over. Why, when I half tries, I can cook the tenderest beefsteak till you couldn't tell it from the under side of a leather trunk.

SMITH. Good! Good! (*crosses* L. *and puts cake on plate*)

LAVINIA. And when I get down to business, I can take a young spring chicken and make you swear it was the grandfather of the identical bird that went into the ark with Moses. (*down* R.)

SMITH. (C.) Then there can be no mistake. You are the woman (*exclamation from* LAVINIA, *"what?"* SMITH *bowing*) the lady, I beg your pardon, the lady, I want.

LAVINIA. (*coming to* SMITH C.) What is there in it?

SMITH. If she leaves the first day, I'll give you a hundred dollars, if the second, seventy-five, the third, fifty. You see, I make an inducement for you to do good bad work. Are you game?

LAVINIA. But if she dies?

SMITH. Under those circumstances, I suppose you'd be entitled to a pension for life.

LAVINIA. (*taking* SMITH'S *hand*) It's a go. The terms are liberal, and I accepts 'em; I'll start right at the next meal, and remember, you can't lose, you can't lose, the Secretary of the Cook Ladies' Union is with you.

(LAVINIA *exits* R. 2.)

SMITH. (*going to* L. *of table to chair, and sits in it*) And now, Auntie, I think I'm ready for you. I think I'll be able to——

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(MRS. S. *enters* R. E. *on tiptoes, looking after* LAVINIA, *off* R. E., *speaking as she comes down to* SMITH.)

MRS. S. (R. C.) Did you arrange everything amicably with the cook, John?

SMITH. We came to a perfect understanding.

MRS. S. (*getting behind* SMITH'S *chair, puts her arms about his neck*) I am glad of that. And now, my dear, there's another thing I must speak about.

SMITH. All right, dearie, what is it?

MRS. S. I need some money for new clothes.

SMITH. (*looking at her*) I thought you promised me——!

MRS. S. (L. C.) I did, John, I did. But styles change so quickly and dresses soil so easily.

SMITH. (*impatiently*) But those you have are all right. That union-made—I mean tailor-made dress for instance, is just as good as new. (*describes dress*)

MRS. S. (*petulantly*) That! Oh, no! It's badly soiled. I'll send for it and show you.

(MRS. S. *rings bell on table* R. ELSIE *enters* R. 3.)
(*To* ELSIE.)

Ask Julia for my tailor-made dress (*describes dress*) and bring it to me here.

(ELSIE *exits* R. 3.)

Now, my dear, you'll soon see that I could not possibly wear it again! (*crossing to* C.)

SMITH. I hate to refuse you anything, Marion, but there is a limit, you know, and you've been playing pretty close to it.

(ELSIE *re-enters with dress. She gives it to* MRS. S. *and exits* R. C.)

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MRS. S. (*showing dress*) Do you see that spot, sir?

SMITH. No, I don't see that spot, sir.

MRS. S. (*pointing*) Why there's a spot, and there, and there's a spot. There are spots all over the dress.

SMITH. There isn't a spot on it.

MRS. S. Oh! John!

SMITH. (*rising*) My dear, I'm afraid your eyes are getting full of polka dots. The dress is just as good as new and with the prospect of two others of your family coming here, I've no money to spare! (*Exits* L. 2.)

MRS. S. (*crosses to chair* R. *and puts dress on it*) Well, I declare, the first really cross words John ever said to me.

(*Enter* BOB L. 3.)

BOB. (*calling in whisper*) Marion!

MRS. S. Bob!

(*Both come* C. *and embrace with animation.*)

MRS. S. This *is* a surprise! How well you are looking, too.

BOB. (C.) I can say the same for you.

MRS. S. (C.) I'm just delighted. (*lands* BOB *down* C.) But see here, young man, what are you doing here? (*with mock severity*)

BOB. (*embarrassed*) Well, you see—you see——

MRS. S. What are you doing here?

BOB. Oh, you might as well get it all at once.

(*Goes up to* R. C. *entrance, brings* ROSE *in and down* C.)

Marion, this is my wife.

Cross ROSE C.

Cross MRS. S. R. *Cross* BOB L.

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MRS. S. (R. C.) Your wife!

ROSE. (*nodding head*) (C.) M!—M!—

BOB. (L. C.) I was married this morning, and knowing what a dear, good sister you are—well, we've come to spend the honeymoon with you. Clever scheme, don't you think so?

MRS. S. (R. C.) Yes. I think it extremely clever.

BOB. Aren't you going to congratulate me?

(*Pass* ROSE *to* MRS. S.)

MRS. S. Of course I am (*going to* ROSE *and shaking hands*) and I wish you lots of happiness from the bottom of my heart. (*kisses* ROSE)

ROSE. Thank you.

BOB. (*going to* ROSE) Didn't I tell you she'd stand by us?

MRS. S. (*aside*) What am I to do with them?

ROSE. (*to* MRS. S.) It's very good of you. I—I was rather doubtful as to what you'd think of me.

MRS. S. (*going to* ROSE) I think you are simply charming (*looking across to* BOB) and that Bob is more lucky than he deserves. (*Crossing back to* R. C.) But it seems so sudden. How did it come about?

BOB. Rose was a dancer with the Metropolitan Opera Company.

MRS. S. (*down* R.) A dancer!

ROSE. And singer.

BOB. (C.) They stranded in Navysville. (*Taking stage* L.) The boys got up a benefit performance for them, Rose and I met; it was love at first sight; we were married this morning.

(*Going to* C. *to* ROSE. *Taking her hand.*)

MRS. S. Bob, I'd do anything possible for you—

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and for Rose—but spending the honeymoon here is simply out of the question.

(*Taking stage* R.)

BOB. (C.) But why is it *out* of the question?

MRS. S. My husband, you've never met him, have you?

(*Going to* BOB. ROSE *crosses* R.)

BOB. No, nor Aunty's new husband, the General either. Funny thing both of you getting married while I was in the Mediterranean.

MRS. S. John and I have not had a day alone since our wedding. We thought the opportunity was coming to-day when a telegram from Auntie arrived saying she and the General would be here at twelve o'clock.

BOB. (L. C.) Aunt coming here?

MRS. S. Yes.

BOB. By Jove, she mustn't see me.

(*Crossing to* ROSE R.)

MRS. S. This has incensed John very much and you can imagine how he would feel if you two were here as well. (*indicating* BOB *and* ROSE)

BOB. (R. C.) And I don't blame him. Four of us and all unexpected—a regular invasion.

ROSE. But what are we to do?

BOB. (C.) Go to a hotel, Marion will let me have some money.

MRS. S. But I haven't any. I spent my last cent yesterday.

BOB. And I spent mine this morning. (*going up* C.)

MRS. S. (*meeting* ROSE *and taking her down* R. *stage*) There, don't worry. We will arrange it somehow. I'll have to invent something for John until things become smooth, and then——

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(SMITH *re-enters* L. 2.)

SMITH. Marion, dear, I'm sorry——

(*Sees* BOB *and* ROSE. *Stops.*)

MRS. S. (*laughs nervously—crosses hurriedly to* SMITH, *takes him by lapels of coat*) John—guess who it is. Have you guessed? No?—well, guess again. (*striking him with both hands on breast*) John, this is my new music master. (*indicating* BOB)

SMITH. He does look very new. (L.)

MRS. S. (L. C.) I was so dissatisfied with my progress under the old one and Mr. —— no, I mean Signor Damiono, has a method which is recommended very highly.

BOB. (L. C.) Si, Senor, I have a wonderfulla method. In sixa lesson you learna da wholla business. (BOB *bows*)

(SMITH *looks at* MRS. S.)

SMITH. (C.) Of course.

(*Going to* BOB *and then motioning at buttons on trousers.*)

MRS. S. (L. C.) That? Oh, that is his band uniform.

SMITH. Who is the girl?

MRS. S. (*laughing, embarrassed*) The girl—oh, yes, the girl. (*with relief*) She? Why, couldn't you tell by looking at her? She's his sister.

SMITH. (C.) Oh, yes, I might have known it, they look so much alike. (*crossing to* L. 1) (*Returning*) And does she teach music, too.

MRS. S. No, she's a dancer.

SMITH. (*crossing to* R. C., *bracing himself up and indicating pleasure, etc. To* ROSE) So you are a dancer? (ROSE *embarrassed*)

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(*As* SMITH *crosses to* ROSE, MRS. S. *moves up to* C. *Calls* BOB, *who meets her.*)

Cross BOB.

Cross ROSE. *Cross* MRS. S.

Cross SMITH.

(ROSE *looks at* MRS. S. *and* BOB., *who in pantomime tell her not to speak.*)

SMITH. We shall be glad to entertain you—I beg your pardon, I'm owner here.

(ROSE *looks at* SMITH, *then back to* MRS. S. *and* BOB, *who again pantomime to her not to speak.*)

As I was saying—

(ROSE *stamps foot and shakes head with annoyance, putting hands up to save her temper.* SMITH *struts away in alarm to* L. C. BOB *goes to* ROSE.)

SMITH. (C.) What's the matter, dear—when I speak to her she— (*imitates* ROSE'S *bus*) Is she deaf?

MRS. S. (L. C.) Of course not. But she doesn't understand English. (*showing relief*)

SMITH. (C.) No?

MRS. S. (L. C.) Not a word!

BOB. (R. C.) No, Signor. She no speaka da English. But as a danca—ah, she shalla show you. (*aside to* ROSE) Do a step or two. (ROSE *dances a few steps to* C., *ending with throwing a kiss to* SMITH)

SMITH. (C.) (*applauding*) Splendid! (*do a step, to* MRS. S.) Take all the lessons you want.

MRS. S. But they cost five dollars.

SMITH. Cheap enough. Take a bunch of 'em! (*applause again*)

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MRS. S. In advance, dear, in advance!

SMITH. (C.) In advance, (*to* BOB) you want pay in advance?

BOB. (R. C.) Si, Signor, Si!

SMITH. (*crossing* R. C.) No, I don't see, Signor. (*going up to* R. 3 *entrance*) Just send in your bill at the end of the month.

(*Exits* R. 3.)

(MRS. S. *drops in chair* L.)

BOB. (C.) That was a narrow escape.

MRS. S. (*rising, crossing to* C.) What am I to do with you two. It is very evident that you've got to stay here.

BOB. (C.) Of course we have, and Aunt mustn't see me either till you've broken it to her gently.

MRS. S. (C.) Then the best thing you can do is to come with me. By the way, have you any baggage?

BOB. (R. C.) Yes, at the depot.

MRS. S. (*crossing* R. 3 E.) Then we'll have to manage to smuggle it in somehow.

(*Showing* BOB *and* ROSE *up to* R. 3 E.)

(*Enter* JULIA R. 3.)

JULIA. (*to* MRS. S.) Did Madam find the dress all right?

MRS. S. (*waving* BOB *and* ROSE *off* R. U. E., *exit* BOB *and* ROSE; *to* JULIA) . Yes, but I shall never wear it again. (*pointing to dress over back of chair* R. C.) There it is. Keep it. Do as you please with it.

JULIA. You are very kind.

(MRS. S. *goes off stage* R. 3 E.)

(ELSIE *enters* R. C. 2 E., *to* ELSIE)

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Here's a surprise. The first dress she has ever given me. I wonder what makes her so generous all at once?

ELSIE. (*looking at dress*) It's nearly new, too.

JULIA. (C.) Of course I don't mind wearing her clothes while she has them in use, but I wonder if it would be good form for me to wear them after she has got through with them. This is such a good dress, though, I will at least try it on.

(ELSIE *goes up,* JULIA *drapes skirt of dress.*)

(LAVINIA *entering* R. 2.)

LAVINIA. Julia, I think this is going to be the best place I struck in a moighty long time. (*sits in arm chair* R.)

(ELSIE *goes back to table* L.)

JULIA. (C.) And *I* think it's a very queer family.

ELSIE. (*back of table*) Indeed it is. The last time I copied one of Mrs. Smith's hats, I found it three weeks behind the style.

JULIA. But it was Mr. Smith I was thinking of. What a peculiar man he is. I've been here *two weeks* and he hasn't even tried to kiss me yet.

LAVINIA. (*in chair*) My, my! what a careless man.

JULIA. I never heard of such a thing.

ELSIE. Nor I.

LAVINIA. Nor I.

JULIA. It has never gone more than two days before. But then until now I've always worked in fashionable families.

LAVINIA. I wouldn't worry about it, if I were you. Most likely he was awfully busy the last two weeks.

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JULIA. Worry! Well, I should say not! He'll come round to it—they all do, in time.

LAVINIA. He hasn't kissed me yet.

(*Bell rings off* L. 3.)

ELSIE. (*crossing* L. 3.) Somebody's in a hurry.

LAVINIA. Let them wait. Let them wait. Some folks think we house working ladies have nothing to do but what we're paid for. (*bell rings again*)

ELSIE. I wonder who it can be?

JULIA. I expect it's the billet doux.

(*Exit* ELSIE L. E.)

LAVINIA. (R.) Billet doux! Why what a funny name.

JULIA. (C.) The General is a Frenchman.

LAVINIA. A Frenchman! A Frenchman! Then I want a raise in wages. Cooking for two nationalities for one salary is agin' the rules o' the union. (*exits* R. 3)

(JULIA *waits for* MRS. BILLETDOUX *up* R. C.)

MRS. B. (*outside* R. 3) So you've come at last, have you, and it's about time. You pay for the cab, General, and don't give him more than fifty cents. Understand, please, not a cent more. (*enters* R. C.) (*To* JULIA, *giving hat and wrap*) Take my things. I'm MRS. Billetdoux.

(*Enter* MRS. SMITH R. 3 E.)

MRS. S. (*advancing*) Auntie!

(JULIA *walks slowly towards* R. 3 *eyeing* MRS. B.)

MRS. B. Marion! (MRS. S. *and* MRS. *B. embrace.*) (JULIA *exits slowly* R. 3)

(MRS. B. *goes up* R. C., *looks after her closely, comes down to* MRS. S.)

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Who is that attractive young person?

MRS. S. My maid. (C.)

MRS. B. Your maid! Discharge her, my dear, discharge her immediately! (*crosses down* L., *sits in chair right of table* L.)

MRS. S. (C.) Because she is pretty? Oh, no!

MRS. B. (C.) Marion, take my advice——!

MRS. S. I know just what you are going to say: "Never throw temptation in your husband's way, my dear. He'll get enough without it." Wasn't that it? (*takes stage* R.)

MRS. B. (L.) Exactly. I am glad to see that you remember *some* of my lessons.

MRS. S. (R. C.) I remember all of them, but some I do not need. According to your theory, it is weak of me, I know, but I still love and trust my husband.

MRS. B. (C.) (*rising and crossing to* MRS. S.) Trust him, indeed! The trustworthy husband is like the sea serpent, he is supposed to exist, but doesn't.

(*Noise of quarrel heard outside* R. *The voice of the* GENERAL *is plainly distinguishable.*)

GENERAL. Here, take this half dollar, you will get no more. (MRS. S. *up to window*)

MRS. S. (GENERAL'S *voice heard quarreling all through* MRS. S.'S *speech*) That is the GENERAL'S voice? (*runs to window* C. *and looks off* C.)

MRS. B. Yes, that is the General's voice.

MRS. S. (*screams*) The General and cabman are fighting. He has thrown him down.

MRS. B. Thrown the General down? (*crosses to* C.)

GENERAL. (*outside* L.) You will get no more, I tell you.

MRS. S. No, the cabman. Now he is going to

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jump on him. (*turns away and then looks out of window*) No—no, he is only wiping his shoes on his prostrate form. (GENERAL *speaks outside.* MRS. B. *crosses back to* L.) Ah, now he throws him a half dollar. Now, he's coming. Thank heaven, he wasn't hurt. (R. C.) (GENERAL *enters* R. C. *brushing imaginary dirt from his coat*)

GENERAL. (*speaking as he comes* C.) And to think that I should have to soil my hands with a common cabman. (L. C.)

MRS. B. (L. C.) General! General!

GENERAL. Yes, my love.

MRS. B. (L. C.) How dare you quarrel on the public street! Don't let it occur again. Next time, give the man the half dollar and let him go.

GENERAL. (C.) Zat is what I did zis time, my dear. I give zis man ze one dollar but he would not go. Instead of zat, he talk back to me in ze cabman language—to me, ze brave general! (*to* MRS. S.) Ah, ma chere, to see you again, it makes me so happy. For you are so lofely. Ah, mon dieu, so lofely!

MRS. S. (R. C.) Ah, General, you haven't forgotten how to flatter, it's very easy to see that.

(SMITH *enters* 3 R. *coming down to* MRS. B. *Grabs her hand and shakes it.*)

Cross GENERAL.

Cross MRS. S. *Cross* MRS. B.

Cross SMITH.

SMITH. Why, Auntie! How do you do? I am delighted to see you, simply delighted. Have a piece of cake. (R. *of table. Offer* MRS. B. *cake, which is taken from table* C. MRS. B. *looks at him scornfully*—SMITH *puts cake back on table*) (C.) Never saw you look so well. How long are you

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going to stay—six months, at least! I won't hear of a day less, not a single day. Why, this morning I was saying to Marion that it only needed your presence here to fill my cup of happiness to overflowing. I've simply been yearning for this visit from you. (*shaking hands with* MRS. B.)

MRS. B. (L.) I don't believe it.

MR. *and* MRS. S. Oh, Auntie! (*crosses* R.)

MRS. B. You may be able to deceive your wife but you can't pull the wool over my eyes. I know you too well to believe a word of what you've just said, and so I tell you very plainly that I came here simply to see my niece. (*crosses to* MARION R.)

SMITH. Good, that lets me out. (*to* GENERAL, *who comes down* C. *to* SMITH) Hello, General!

GENERAL. Glad to see you, my boy, glad to see you. (GENERAL *shakes* SMITH'S *hands effusively*)

MRS. B. (R. C.) General! General! ! (*looks at him indignantly*)

GENERAL. (*looks first at* MRS. B. *and then at* SMITH *and then withdraws his hand from* SMITH) How do you do—how do you do—(*very coldly*)

SMITH. Ha! Ha! She has you under her thumb all right. (GENERAL *goes up stage*)

MRS. B. (R. C.) That is where your wife ought to have you, sir. (*crossing to* R. H.)

SMITH. (MRS. S. *comes back of arm chair*) Perhaps so. But in this little domestic drama I am at least a co-star, and the time will never come when you will see me simply playing a thinking part, and footing the bills. And that's no evanescent dream either. (*crossing to* C.)

Crosses GENERAL.

Crosses MRS. B. *Crosses* MRS. S.

Crosses SMITH.

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MRS. S. (*up* R.) And only six months ago he said I was to be queen of his household.

SMITH. (L. C.) And what was I to be?

MRS. S. You were to be the king.

SMITH. (*going towards* MRS. S.) Right! You were to be the queen and I was to be the king, but did we ever agree that she (*pointing to* MRS. B.) was to come around here and try to be the ace? (MRS. B. *highly indignant*—MRS. S. *astonished goes up* R. C. GENERAL B. *up stage laughing silently.* SMITH *crosses* L. *Cor. Bus. of picking up chip from floor and putting on shoulder*)

MRS. B. General! General! Are you going to stand by and see me insulted like this? (*crosses to* C. GENERAL *down* L. C. MRS. SMITH *taking stage* R.)

GENERAL. (*crossing to* MRS. B.) Not at all! Not at all! (*crosses* L. *to* SMITH) You will get yourself into trouble if you call my wife ze playing card. I am ze brave man. (*aside to* SMITH) It is all right. Go on, go on!

SMITH. I know you're a brave man, General, I know it. (*going to the door* L. 2) Nobody but a brave man would have the nerve to marry her. (*indicates* MRS. B.; *indignation of* MRS. B. SMITH *makes quick exit* L. 2. MRS. B. *looks after him*)

MRS. B. To think you should have such a man for a husband. (*turns and goes up stage.* GENERAL *goes to table* L., *examines cake, books, etc.*)

MRS. S. (R. C.) But it is only to-day that he has been cross. (*going up* R.)

MRS. B. (*up stage* C.) I will bring him to his senses. I'll teach him a thing or two. Come, my dear. (*offering her hand to* MRS. S.) I'll show you how to train a husband. General! General!

GENERAL. (L. C.) Yes, my love!

MRS. B. (R. *up*) I am going to have a talk with my niece. You remain here till I return. But

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mind, don't go out of the house. Don't you dare go out. (*exit* MRS. B *and* MRS. S. R. 3 E.)

GENERAL. (*going up stage and following* MRS. B. *to* R. 3) I would not think of such a thing, my dear. Not at all, not at all.

(*Enter* MAJOR L. 2.)

MAJOR. Why, General!

(GENERAL *turns and comes down* C., *meets* MAJOR.)

GENERAL. Major! (*they shake hands warmly*)

MAJOR. (L. C.) A long time since we two boys of the Old Guard met. Haven't seen you since your wedding, sir, not since your wedding.

GENERAL. (*taking stage* R.) I vish I had not seen me, eizer.

MAJOR. Hard campaigning, eh? Hard campaigning.

GENERAL. Before I marry her, (*bus.*) I was one of ze boys. I flirt wiz ze girls, I have ze champagne supper. Now she watch me all ze day, and she talk to me all ze night. She say, "General, General!" and I say "Yes, my darling." (*crossing down* L.)

MAJOR. (C.) Never surrender, General, never surrender. (*going towards* GENERAL)

GENERAL. (*turning to* MAJOR) Wiz ze men I am still ze lion, but wiz her I am now ze lamb. (JULIA *enters* R. 3, *crosses down* R. *wearing dress* MRS. SMITH *gave to her.* GENERAL *turns, sees* JULIA) Oh, is she not beautiful! At ze sight of such lofeliness, I feel all my courage return. (*Pantomime, as if to say "Speak to her."* MAJOR *nods his head, "Yes." Crossing* R. *to* JULIA) Mademoiselle, good morning!

JULIA. Good morning, sir?

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GENERAL. I did not know that Mrs. Smith had ozzer guests.

JULIA. (*aside*) The General! (*the* MAJOR *goes up behind chair* R. *of table* C.)

GENERAL. To meet so beautiful a young lady is ze pleasure beyond compare.

JULIA. When you know me better, sir, perhaps you won't think so.

GENERAL. Zat could not be possible, for I know zat you are beautiful and General Billetdoux was ever a slave to beauty. (*the* GENERAL *bows;* JULIA *and* MAJOR *laugh aside*)

JULIA. To save any misunderstanding, I think I had better tell you who I am.

GENERAL. Zat is for you to say, but your lofely costume, your savoir faire, ze tout ensemble, ze whole business tell me zat you are so great, ze grand, ze big lady.

JULIA. And yet I am only Mrs. Smith's maid. (JULIA *bows to* GENERAL. MAJOR *and* JULIA *laugh aloud.* JULIA *goes up* C. *towards* MAJOR)

MAJOR. It's on you, General! It's on you! (*up* C.)

GENERAL. (*takes stage* R. *then crosses to* JULIA C.) You dear, sweet girl, why did you not say so before. (*the* GENERAL *tries to put his arm around* JULIA*'s waist; she repulses him coquettishly*)

JULIA. Tut, tut, tut! We are not well enough acquainted for that——

GENERAL. Oh——

JULIA. Yet— (*glancing at* GENERAL—GENERAL *returns the glance*)

GENERAL. Yet— (*giving her another look*) Just one little word— (*crossing down* R.) but it save my life.

JULIA. (*coming* C.) Would you wish to continue the acquaintance now that you know I am simply Mrs. Smith's maid?

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GENERAL. (*advancing quickly*) Would I? Mm! Of course.

JULIA. Then meet me here to-night.

GENERAL. Here?

JULIA. While the cat's away, the mice will play.

GENERAL. Oh, but I might have to go out wiz my wife. (*come down* L.)

MAJOR. That would be too bad, General, too bad.

JULIA. For of course you would not dare disappoint her.

GENERAL. I—I not dare! I am ze brave general. I dare do anything, (*taking stage* R. *return quickly to* JULIA) and I will meet you here to-night without fail! (*tries to kiss* JULIA *and she prevents him from doing so*)

JULIA. No, no! Not until to-night! (*gets* R.)

GENERAL. (*bowing*) Very well, mademoiselle, not until to-night! (*to* MAJOR) Eh, Major?

MAJOR. (*coming down to* GENERAL) Eh, General!

GENERAL. (L. C.) Still one of ze Old Guard.

MAJOR. (L.) Still one of the Old Guard!

GENERAL. (L. C.) Never surrender.

MAJOR. Never surrender!

(*They lock arms, march up to* R. C., *turn and bow low to* JULIA, *then run and bring each other to* R.; *exclaim in chorus "Ah!" and exit* L. 3.)

JULIA. This is the funniest flirtation I've had in many a day. Mrs. Billetdoux doesn't like me—I know that—but I think I can have some fun at her expense. This dress is really becoming, and I think I will wear it, even if Mrs. Smith has given it up.

(*Music p.p. till* SMITH *kisses* JULIA, *then swell till curtain.* JULIA *turns and examines dress*

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with her back towards L. 2 *entrance.* SMITH *enters* L. E. 2.)

SMITH. (*seeing* JULIA) There's Marion. She has on that dress just to conciliate me, and show me that I was right. The dear little woman, I must meet her half way.

(SMITH *smiling in anticipation of surprising his wife tip-toes cautiously to* JULIA, *taking* JULIA *in his arms, turns her around and kisses her. At the same moment* MRS. SMITH *and* MRS. BILLETDOUX *enter* R. 3, MAJOR *and* GENERAL *enter* R. C. *and* LAVINIA R. E. *in time to see* SMITH *kiss* JULIA. *He discovers his mistake, sinks into chair. Consternation of* MRS. SMITH' *and* MRS. BILLETDOUX'S *faces.* GENERAL *and* MAJOR *laughing.*)

QUICK CURTAIN.

(SECOND CURTAIN:—SMITH *up stage to* MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. GENERAL *and* MAJOR *down behind table laughing immoderately.* JULIA C., *looking down demurely.* LAVINIA R.)

CURTAIN.

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ACT II.

(*Music at rise.*)

SCENE:—*This is a double set. Room on* R. *represents a smoking-room or den. Room on* L. *a library. Room in* SMITH'S *residence. Small smoking-room* R. *Practical partitions with transom and lock and knob, between smoking-room and drawing-room. In smoking-room table and two chairs. Larger room is handsomely furnished, with table and chair near door leading to smoking-room, a tête-à-tête sofa* L. *Exits from room* L. 2 *and* L. 3 *and* C. *Exit from smoking-room* R. 3.

DISCOVERED:—*At rise of curtain* MRS. SMITH *and* MRS. BILLETDOUX *seated in window back of* C. *door. Both come down stage at rise.*

MRS. B. (L. *coming down* C. *crosses* L.) I am so glad to see you take it so sensibly, Marion.

MRS. S. (R. *following her*) What did you think I would do? Cry and tear my hair and bemoan the wickedness of man? Oh, no! None of that for me, thank you.

MRS. B. (L.) But you had such faith in your husband. (*crosses to* L. *and sits in tête-à-tête sofa*)

MRS. S. (C.) Yes, but thanks to your sensible tuition, I have all the time been fully aware that what was faith before marriage becomes foolishness after.

MRS. B. But that he should prefer your maid to you! Your maid! I gave him credit for better judgment than that.

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MRS. S. (C. *crossing to* MRS. B.) Auntie, in such cases judgment has nothing to do with the question. If man were restricted by law to the possession of one flower the individual fortunate enough to wear in his coat the most beautiful of roses would be absolutely unable to resist a desire to pluck the dowdiest little daisy that ever grew by the wayside. (*going* R.)

MRS. B. You are quite right, my dear.

MRS. S. (C.) I know all this auntie, and yet I have a lurking hope, yes, almost a belief, that John will be able to explain.

MRS. B. (L. *rising and going to* MARION) Yes—give a man time and he'll explain anything. You are simply trying to deceive yourself, my dear.

MRS. S. Certainly: in other words, I am trying to be happy. For of what does a wife's happiness consist? One part knowledge, four parts ignorance and five parts self delusion. You see, I have remembered some of your lessons.

MRS. B. And I am glad of it. (*going up* C. SMITH *enters* L. 2, *speaking as he comes*)

SMITH. (C.) Marion, I want to set matters straight. (MRS. B. *turns and looks at* SMITH)

MRS. S. (R. C.) I shall be very glad to have you do that, John. I suppose it was an accident.

SMITH. (C.) No, it was a mistake.

MRS. S. (R.) Certainly you were caught.

MRS. B. (L. C. *coming down* L. C.) Very good, my dear.

SMITH. (*going to* MRS. B.) Will you please keep out of my affairs which concern only my wife and me. (*to* MRS. S.) You remember that dress?

MRS. S. (R.) Yes.

SMITH. (C.) Did I know that you had given it to your maid?

MRS. S. (R.) I think not.

SMITH. Well, don't you see?

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MRS. S. I must admit that I don't.

SMITH. (C.) She was wearing it, was standing with her back to me, is about the height as yourself and has hair nearly the same color. I mistook her for you, and that's all there is to it.

(SMITH C., MRS. S. R. C. *and* MRS. B. L. C.). (MRS. SMITH *attempting to put her arms around* MR. SMITH'S *neck, but catching* MRS. B.'S *eye draws back with a cynical look on her face.* SMITH *starts to embrace his wife, sees her look at* MRS. B., *turns and goes over to* MRS. B. *with an impatient gesture, suddenly turns and goes up* C. *expressing anger. Again turns, looks at* MRS. B., *pulls himself together and down to* MRS. S. *again.*)

SMITH. (C.) Have you ever known me to deceive you?

MRS. S. (R.) I have never *known* you to do it.

MRS. B. (L.) Very good again. (SMITH *gives impatient look at* MRS. B.)

SMITH. Do you think I am telling you an untruth now? Honestly, tell me honestly, do you think I am telling you an untruth?

MRS. S. (R. C. *hesitatingly*) I—I——!

SMITH. (C.) I want to know exactly where I stand in this matter. I either deliberately kissed her and am now deliberately trying to deceive you, or it was a mistake, as I have said, and I am telling the truth. There is one of two positions open to you, you believe me or you do not believe me. Which is it?

MRS. S. (*after slight pause*) I believe you. (*embracing* SMITH)

SMITH. (*turning his wife to* L., *facing* MRS. B. *and waving his hand*) Auntie! (MRS. B. *looks disgusted.* SMITH *puts his wife back* R.)

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MRS. B. (L.) And to think the girl I reared can be fooled like that. (*to* SMITH) I would have you understand, sir, that the dress does not make the woman. (*going to* SMITH)

SMITH. (C.) No, but it sometimes breaks the man.

MRS. B. (L.) If I had been wearing that dress would you have kissed me?

SMITH. (C.) I refuse to answer for fear of incriminating myself.

MRS. B. (*to* MRS. S.) There, you see. It was not the dress after all. (*crossing down to* L.)

MRS. S. (*going to* SMITH) Auntie, I believe him. Some men tell the truth, you know. (*arms around his neck*)

MRS. B. (L. C.) Yes, dear, occasionally. My *first* husband did. He talked in his sleep!

SMITH. (C. *crossing to* R.) That was probably the only chance he got.

MRS. S. Auntie, you had better come with me. (*smiling at* SMITH) I'm going to see about the luncheon, dear. (*exits* C.)

SMITH. (R. C.) Luncheon! If that cook only does her duty!

MRS. B. (*up stage, going toward* R. *indignantly*) And I wish to superintend the preparation.

SMITH. (R. *corner*) Auntie.

MRS. B. (*up stage, turning*) Sir!

SMITH. Ta-ta. (*exit* MRS. B., C. *to* R. H.)

SMITH. (*going to* C.) Well, I got out of that luckily. If Marion had her aunt's disposition——!

(*The* GENERAL *enters* L. 2, *grasps* SMITH'S *hand and shakes it warmly.*)

GENERAL. (L. C.) Let me congratulate you, my boy. Let me congratulate you. I did not know

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zat you were one of us, one of ze Old Guard, one of ze devil of a fellow like me. I did not know zat, my boy, I did not know it.

SMITH. (C.) What are you talking about?

GENERAL. Did I not see you kiss her? Did I not understand? But I do not blame you, my boy. Not at all, not at all.

SMITH. But that was a mistake. (*down* R.)

GENERAL. Of course. Of course it was all ze mistake. You may tell zat to ze ladies, but not to me. Oh, no, not to me, my boy, not to me.

SMITH. (*back to* GENERAL) General, you are wrong. She was wearing Marion's dress. I mistook her for my wife.

GENERAL. (L. C.) Lofely, lofely! You should not be the contractor. You should be ze special correspondent. (SMITH *bows*) You lie so beautifully.

SMITH. (C.) But it isn't a lie. It's the truth.

GENERAL. (L. C.) My dear fellow, you hurt my feelings to joke wiz me like zat—you hurt my feelings. Do you not see I am one of you, you are one of me, are we not one of ze Old Guard? (*placing hand on* SMITH'S *shoulder*)

SMITH. (*impatiently going to* R.) I am not joking. I was never more in earnest in my life.

GENERAL. And was it—was it really ze grand mistake?

SMITH. (R. C.) That's what I've been trying to tell you.

GENERAL. And you are not one of us after all?

SMITH. (*coming to* C.) Well, hardly.

GENERAL. (*going* L.) Zat is too bad, zat is too bad. (*turns, looks at* SMITH) And it was ze dress, it was ze dress.

SMITH. (C.) Yes, it was the dress.

GENERAL. (*crossing to* SMITH) That is too

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bad again. Pardon, one minute. Do you think my wife's dress would fit zat girl?

SMITH. What's that?

GENERAL. (*going down* L.) Oh, I was just sinking about something, zat was all. (*turning, going towards* SMITH) Pardon, one minute more. And have you told about zis dress to your wife?

SMITH. Yes, and everything's all right. (*going* R. C.)

GENERAL. Lucky fellow. And have you seen ze girl to get ze story straight wiz her?

SMITH. The story is true and I don't have to see her. (*going* R. C.)

GENERAL. (L. *beckoning* SMITH *to him*) My boy, my dear boy, you see ze girl and fix it up. Ze crooked man wiz ze straight story, he is all right, but ze straight man wiz ze crooked story—he is in the bouillon. You fix it, my boy (*crossing to door* L. 2, *turning to* SMITH *again*) you fix it. (*Exits* L. 2)

SMITH. (L. *going to door where* GENERAL *exits*) Well, isn't he a dizzy old reprobate. But I wouldn't be surprised if he were right. If anyone questioned the girl, and her version didn't agree with mine—(*points to himself*) bouillon! (*puts hand to pocket and takes roll of money out and looks at it*) Ah, there's the money I drew for Marion this morning. It was mean of me to refuse her just because her aunt was coming. However, I will——! (*starts up stage and sees maid*)

(JULIA *enters* C. *from* R.)

NOTE:—*This scene must be played by* JULIA *with a great deal of decisiveness and assumed innocence.* SMITH'S *facial expression must help out his points.*

JULIA. (C. *up stage*) Excuse me, sir. I

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thought Mrs. Smith was here. (*turns to go*)

SMITH. (R. C. *Goes up and takes her by the arm*) I wish to see you a moment. (*brings her down* C.)

(MRS. B. *appears at door.*)

SMITH. (*speaks to maid*) I want to see you about that little mistake that occurred this morning. For it was a mistake, wasn't it?

JULIA. (R. C.) I didn't know it was a mistake, sir.

SMITH. (C.) I had never kissed you before, had I?

JULIA. No, sir, but then everything has to have a beginning.

SMITH. (R. C.) And did you think I had kissed you knowingly?

JULIA. (C.) I hadn't thought of that, sir. I only knew that you *had* kissed me and in the presence of witnesses. (*looks up at* SMITH)

SMITH. But it was all a misunderstanding, and if anyone questions you, I want you to tell them so.

JULIA. I couldn't do that, sir. It would make me look so ridiculous. (*looking up at* SMITH, *then throwing eyes down modestly*)

SMITH. (C.) You ridiculous? How would it make me look? Oh, come, now, it *was* a mistake, and you know it.

JULIA. (R. C.) I don't know it, sir, but I might be made to think it. (*looking at* SMITH *for an instant*)

SMITH. (C.) What do you mean?

JULIA. (R. C.) Well, sir, I should imagine I was doing myself an injustice if I thought it was a mistake— (*pause*) for less than five hundred dollars.

SMITH. (*moving away from her towards* L.)

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Five hundred dollars! Five hundred——! (*back to* JULIA) What is this—blackmail?

JULIA. Blackmail! Blackmail! (*looking at* SMITH, *then casting her eyes down*) And I thought you were a gentleman. I wouldn't think it a mistake now, not for a thousand dollars.

SMITH. (*aside*) A thousand now. (*to* JULIA) You wouldn't, eh! Well, what are you going to do about it?

JULIA. You'll see, sir. You'll find there's a law in this country, a law for the poor as well as for the rich; that is, if they have good witnesses. And I couldn't ask for better witnesses than your wife and her aunt. (*looking up at* SMITH) Could I, sir?

SMITH. (L., *looks at* JULIA, *goes* L. *aside*) I'm being worked, and I can't help myself. (*back to* JULIA) And if I gave you five hundred dollars, do you think you could think it was a mistake?

JULIA. (R.) I don't know that I ought to, sir, the damage to my feelings is much more than that. To be kissed by you, and then find I was mistaken for Mrs. Smith—that's very humiliating, sir. (*looking at* SMITH, *then down*) But you've always been good and kind to me, so I'll take the five hundred, think it was a mistake and try to forget it.

SMITH. (C. *turns*) Well, I'll be——! You'd like to have the money immediately, of course?

JULIA. (R. C.) If you please, sir.

SMITH. (*crosses to desk*) Ye—s. Well, I might as well give you the check now as at any other time.

JULIA. (*crossing to sofa* L. *after speech*) Excuse me, sir, but if it's all the same to you, I'd rather have the cash.

SMITH. Oh, you would, would you? Well, I have the amount with me. (*going to* JULIA. *The*

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GENERAL *and* MAJOR *appear* C. *from* R. *and see* SMITH *give* JULIA *the money. An action of surprise on their part, and exit.* SMITH *counts money up to five to* JULIA)

JULIA. (L. C.) I hope this doesn't inconv n ience you, sir?

SMITH. (L.) Inconvenience me? Oh, dear, no. I get these little attentions every day. (*going* L.) Do you know, I think you're an awfully clever girl.

JULIA. Thank you, sir. (*courtesy*)

SMITH. Yes, I do. (*crossing to door* R. *opens door, turns to* JULIA) Yes, I do. I think you are so touchingly clever that you'd better not stay round here.

JULIA. (*going to* L. C.) I thought of that too, sir, and I'm going to give notice to-day.

SMITH. Good. Such mistakes, while not exactly unpleasant, are decidedly too expensive. (*exit into smoking room, stops*) Done, done for five hundred. Had I kissed her twice. Oh——! (*exits* R.)

JULIA. (L. *looking at money, then at door where* SMITH *went off*) He's a good, kind man, that's what he is. (*laughs heartily, goes* C. GENERAL *and* MAJOR *re-enter* C.)

GENERAL. (C. *shaking his finger at* JULIA) Ah, ha, we saw you, we saw you, did we not, Major?

MAJOR. (L. *coming down* C. *with* GENERAL) Right you are, General, right you are.

JULIA. (R. C.) You evidently misjudge me, gentlemen. I simply struck Mr. Smith for an increase of salary.

GENERAL. (C.) Oh, zen you are the young lady of whom I read so much—ze striking beauty. (*turning to* MAJOR *and giving him a wink*) Ah, Major! Zat is ze joke—ze French joke.

MAJOR. (*laughingly*) The striking beauty. Capital, General, capital.

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GENERAL. (C. *to* MAJOR) Just one word wiz you, please, Major. (MAJOR *nods yes.* GENERAL *turns to* JULIA, *bowing*) Pardon! (*to* MAJOR *in pantomime, pointing to* JULIA *as if to say, "May I speak with her!"*)

MAJOR. Certainly, certainly. Still one of the Old Guard.

GENERAL. Still one of ze Old Guard.

MAJOR. Eh, General.

GENERAL. Eh, Major.

MAJOR. Never surrender!

GENERAL. Nevaire surrender. (*lock arms and go to door* L. 2, *looking at each other*)

GENERAL and MAJOR. Ah——! (*exit* MAJOR)

GENERAL. (*turning meets* JULIA C.) And now sit down one minute and talk about to-night!

JULIA. (R.) I'm afraid it would not be right. Besides it's dangerous.

GENERAL. Oh, it will be all right, I can assure you. Sit here wiz me one minute and tell me about ze party.

(JULIA *and* GENERAL *sit on tête-à-tête sofa.* GENERAL *down stage and* JULIA *opposite.*)

JULIA. Well, as all the family are going out to-night, the girls are going to give a fancy dress ball.

GENERAL. Oh, zat will be lofely.

JULIA. I'm going as (*gives description of dress she is to wear*) but so there will be no mistake, I will wear an evening star in my hair.

(MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. *appear at* C. *door.* JULIA *sitting around to shield the* GENERAL *from their sight.*)

GENERAL. (*passing arm around to* JULIA'S

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right shoulder) Ze evening star in ze hair. I will remember zat.

MRS. B. (C. *to* MRS. S.) Your husband! Making another mistake. You should have one trained like mine. (*coming down* C.) And now, Mr. Smith, what is your explanation? (GENERAL *jumps up, takes* L. JULIA *rises*)

MRS. S. (R. C. *seeing* GENERAL, *astonished, turns to* MRS. B., *points to* GENERAL) Auntie, my husband! (MRS. S. *laughs*)

Picture (1.)

MRS. B. *crosses.*

MRS. S. *crosses.* JULIA *crosses.*

GENERAL *crosses.*

MRS. B. (R. C. *in consternation*) How dare you, sir, how dare you? (*go up* C. *and down* C. *angrily.* JULIA *comes down* L. *corner.* GENERAL *appealing to* MRS. S. *in pantomime*)

GENERAL. (L. C. *pointing to* JULIA'S *dress*) It was ze dress, my dear, it was ze dress.

MRS. S. (R.) Don't you understand. Of course, it was the dress—the dress. (*following* MRS. B. *up stage*) What could be more natural?

GENERAL. (*crossing to* MRS. B.) Zat is it—just like Smith—just like Smith.

MRS. B. (*excitedly walking up and down stage. Coming down to* GENERAL) That will do, sir, that will do. March right out of here.

GENERAL. (L. C.) It was ze dress.

MRS. B. (C.) I'll settle with you after a while.

GENERAL. (L. C. *appealingly to* MRS. B.) But it was ze dress—it was ze dress.

MRS. B. (C.) Not another word, sir. (*stamping her foot*) Not another word.

(GENERAL *exits* C. *off* R. *protesting.*)

MRS. B. (C. *coming down to* JULIA) And as

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for you, Miss, pack up your things and leave immediately.

JULIA. (L.) You are making a slight mistake. I am not working for you, and you can't discharge me.

MRS. B. (C.) But my niece can. (*goes to* MRS. SMITH R. C.) Of course you will not allow this person to remain under your roof another minute.

MRS. S. (C. *crossing* L.) Julia, under the circumstances, I think you had better.

JULIA. (L.) Just as you say, ma'am. But a little incident occurred this morning of which you were both witnesses. It was all a mistake, I know, on Mr. Smith's part; but it would be very disagreeable to explain in court, especially as I should have to call on you to testify.

MRS. S. and MRS. B. (R.) What do you mean?

JULIA. (L.) If you discharged me, it would seem as though you doubted my character, and I should have to bring suit against Mr. Smith in self-defense, especially as I am to be married in three weeks. But if you would let me give you two weeks' notice, I wouldn't think of such a thing, because you've been so good and kind to me.

MRS. S. (C. *apart crossing to* MRS. B. *down* R.) It would never do for this thing to get out.

MRS. B. (R. *apart*) We must hush it up, of course, but don't let her stay an hour after her notice has expired.

MRS. S. (C.) Well, Julia, as you're to be married very soon, I'll allow you to remain until two weeks from to-day.

JULIA. (R.) Thank you, ma'am.

MRS. B. (*crossing* C. *to* MARION) Now, Marion, let us go and find the General. I am just aching to have a few minutes' quiet conversation with him. (*bell*)

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MRS. S. (C.) Auntie, if my husband were trained like yours, I wouldn't have to worry about him, would I?

MRS. B. (C.) Marion! (MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. *go up* C. *to exit.*)

(*Enter* ELSIE L. 3 E. *with card.*)

MRS. S. (R. C.) What?

ELSIE. (L.) A gentleman to see Mr. Smith, ma'am.

MRS. S. (L. C.) I'll take the card. Show the gentleman in. (*reads card*) "Count Wilhelm Von Guggenheim."

(ELSIE *exits* C.)

MRS. B. A count!

MRS. S. Yes. I wonder what he can want with John. Come, Auntie. (MRS. B. *and* MRS. S. *exit* C.)

(*Enter* ELSIE, *followed by* COUNT. ELSIE *courtesies to* COUNT *and exits.* COUNT *comes down* C. *as* JULIA *crosses to door in partition.* COUNT *sees her,* JULIA *turns, and the* COUNT *beckons.*)

COUNT. (C.) You work mit dose people dat is here? No? Yes?

JULIA. (R.) Yes, sir.

COUNT. (C.) And you know about dose people, what is going on. No? Yes?

JULIA. (R. C.) Well, I should say so.

COUNT. Den told me about Miss Schmidt. Is she—is she— (COUNT *taking stage* L.) Ach mein gott. How shall I say him. (*turns and rushes back to* JULIA R. C.) Is she going mit anoder man to marry, already? No? Yes?

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JULIA. (R. C.) Miss Smith? Well, I should say not.

COUNT. Den a chance there is for me. Maybe, perhaps.

JULIA. (R. C.) A chance for you, with Miss Smith?

COUNT. I see two ladies on der street mit one anudder side by each.

JULIA. Side by each?

COUNT. Der one lofely and young, der odder unlofely and unyoung. I to my friend say, "Who are dey. He say, "Mrs. and Miss Schmidt," und dough der mudder, I like me not, I in lofe do fall right away mit der beautiful Miss Schmidt. (*taking* L. C.)

JULIA. (*aside*) This is too good to spoil. (*to* COUNT) The ladies are not mother and daughter, Count. They are sisters-in-law.

COUNT. (*back to* C.) Is dot so! I am glad you told me. If I to Mrs. Schmidt had called her mudder of Miss Schmidt, I might make offend by her. No? Yes?

JULIA. (R. C.) She certainly would think it rather queer.

SMITH. (C. *outside*) I wonder what he wants with me.

JULIA. (R.) There's Mr. Smith. (*exit* JULIA *through door of partition.* COUNT *takes* L. C. *as* SMITH *enters* C.)

SMITH. (C.) Count Von Guggenheim. (SMITH *has some difficulty with the name.* COUNT *bows*) I am Mr. Smith. What can I do for you?

COUNT. (L. *approaching* SMITH) I quick to the point will reach. You a sister possession and I by her would marry for I lofe her with all the wholeness of my heart. (SMITH *starts for door* R. *as though afraid; stops at door*)

SMITH. (R.) I'm afraid my hearing isn't good.

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You wish to marry my sister? (*coming down to* COUNT)

COUNT. (L. *bows*) You hafe said. Und so as is der custom mit der Von Guggenheim, I to you haf come as der top of der house. (SMITH *looks astonished*) You look astonishment.

SMITH. (C.) Yes, it's my turn.

COUNT. (L. *ecstatically*) But she is so beautiful—she is so beautiful. (*taking* L. C.)

SMITH. (R. C.) My sister beautiful! Well, they say that love is blind.

COUNT. (C.) Mit der hair like der blackness of der night.

SMITH. (R. *aside*) He's not only blind, he's color blind.

COUNT. Und so young. Ah! so lofely and so young.

SMITH. (R. *aside*) I wonder what is the matter with him? Guess I'll get out of here. (*starts for door* R.)

COUNT. (*dashing over to* SMITH) Will you mit her speak for me, und if "yes" she do say, you will be mein friend; mine brudder!

SMITH. I'll be your brudder all right. (*hug*) I'm not so sure about the friend.

COUNT. (L. C.) Mit her speak as if it was for you.

SMITH. (R.) No! No! That wouldn't do you justice.

COUNT. I to Berlin go. I must to-night the answer get for to-morrow is the day I sail by.

SMITH. (C.) Very well, Count. I will speak to my sister, and you can come back for your answer, say at eight o'clock.

COUNT. (*crossing* R., *grasping* SMITH'S *hand and shaking it*) I here will be. Und if "no" she say I myself will suicide. (*crossing to* C.) Yes, Mr. Schmidt, I your sister so much do lofe dat if she

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vill not Countess Von Guggenheim be I will mit me to der river go und jump in mit my head in front of my feet. (*quick exit* L. 3 E.)

SMITH. Well, that beats me. (*going to desk* L. *sits and busies himself with papers, etc. Enter* MISS SMITH)

MISS S. John (*looking around*), has the Count gone?

SMITH. Oh, you know?

MISS S. (C.) Yes; your wife told me. What did he want?

SMITH. (L.) Think of the most unlikely thing in the world and you've got it. He wanted to marry you.

MISS S. (C.) Me! Why, I never even spoke to him.

SMITH. (L.) That probably accounts for it. But there can be no mistake. He made a formal proposal, and is coming for his answer at eight o'clock.

MISS S. (R.) *You* wanted me to accept the Major. Your wife spoke of proposals at *my* time of life, and after all I am to be a countess, for I shall accept him, of course. A countess! I wonder what *some* people will think, now. (*taking stage* R.)

SMITH. (C. *rising, coming* C.) Then you jilt the poor old Major?

MISS S. (R.) Jilt him? No, I never accepted him.

SMITH. (L.) We'll say then that you refuse him.

MISS S. Of course I do. Refuse the Major and accept the Count. (*crossing* L. *sits in tête-à-tête sofa.* SMITH *going up* C.)

SMITH. Very well, I'll see him when he comes, and then turn him over to you. (*up* C. *door.* SMITH *turns, looks at* MISS SMITH) Young,

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beautiful, suicide. Oh, this is too deep for me. (*exit* R. C.)

MISS S. (*rising*) A countess! I a countess? The Countess Von Guggenheim. (*bowing. Enter* MAJOR) How I will snub that sister-in-law of mine. (*coming down in front of seat.* MAJOR *coming down to* MISS SMITH)

MAJOR. (C.) My dear Juliette!

MISS S. (L.) Major Duncombe.

MAJOR. (C.) Not so formal, Juliette, not so formal. When I remember that glorious half-hour in the conservatory last night and the oaths we swore——!

MISS S. Pardon me. If there was any swearing done, it was not me. Your ideas about last night seem a little confused.

MAJOR. (L. C.) On some points, perhaps, on some points. But there is one thing I shall never forget. You pressed your lips to mine and called me Willie.

MISS S. (L.) On the impulse of the moment a girl is likely to do things which she afterwards regrets. (MISS SMITH *sits in tête-à-tête*)

MAJOR. (*leaning over back of sofa*) Regrets! Regrets! Do you mean——! But no, you can't! You can't—last night you told me to put the question again to-day and you would answer. I do. Juliette, Divinity of my boyhood, idol of my manhood, dream of my soul, will you be Mrs. William Duncombe?

MISS S. While appreciating the honor you do me, I am compelled to say I must decline it.

MAJOR. What—you refuse me. You cannot mean it, Juliette, you cannot mean it. Last night my eyes looked love to eyes that spoke again, last night I held you in these arms, last night——!

MISS S. (R. *rising from sofa and crossing* R.) Last night has passed and this is to-day. I repeat I must decline to be Mrs. William Duncombe.

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MAJOR. (C. *going to* C.) But why this change? If I have done anything or said anything——!

MISS S. (R.) No, no! (*taking two steps towards door* R.)

MAJOR. (C.) Then what can it be—can there be another?

MISS S. (*down* R.) And if there is? (*at door* R. *taking hold of door-knob*)

MAJOR. (R. C. *advancing towards* MISS S.) Then I'll have revenge, madam. I'll kill him.

MISS S. (*opening door in partition and going into the middle room*) Don't try to frighten me, Major Duncombe. The gentleman I have promised to marry is fully able to take care of himself.

MAJOR. (*holding door open*) The gentleman you have promised to marry?

MISS S. (*other room* R.) Precisely. (*go to door in* R. *flat*)

MAJOR. Who is he? Who is he?

MISS S. (R.) That you will learn soon enough. Until then, rest assured that threats and vows of vengeance will affect him just as little as they affect me. (*giving* MAJOR *look of scorn and exit* R.)

MAJOR. (*speaking as* MISS S. *goes off* R. *slamming door*) We'll see about that, madam. Able to take care of himself, is he. We'll see about that, we'll see about that. (*crossing to* L. 2 E.) After waiting twenty years to be jilted like this. (*exit* L. 2)

(*Enter* MRS. SMITH, MRS. B. *and* GENERAL C. MRS. B. *and* MRS. S. *coming down.* GENERAL *remains up stage.*)

MRS. B. (R. C.) I never tasted such a luncheon in all my life. Positively, I never did.

MRS. S. (L.) And she came so highly recom-

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mended, I cannot understand it. (*going* L. *to writing desk.* GENERAL *coming down* C.)

MRS. B. (R. C.) The General here with his epicurean taste, could not eat a single thing.

GENERAL. (C. *up*) I am ze guest and would nevaire complain. (*crossing to* MRS. B. R.)

MRS. B. (R. *to* MRS. S.) Surely you will not tolerate such a state of affairs.

MRS. S. (L. *ringing bell on desk*) Indeed, I shall not. (*enter* ELSIE C. *from* L.) Elsie, send the cook here to me. (ELSIE *exits* C. R.)

MRS. B. Let me talk to her, dear, I'm afraid you'll be too gentle with her. I'll show you how to train your servants.

(*Enter* LAVINIA *from* C. *wiping hands on apron; comes down* C. *to* MRS. S. C.)

LAVINIA. (C. *to* MRS. S.) You sent for me, ma'am?

MRS. S. (L.) Yes, Lavinia, how dare you——

MRS. B. (R. C.) That was a fine luncheon, wasn't it? And you profess to be a cook.

LAVINIA. (C.) Are you speakin' to me?

MRS. B. (R. C.) Of course I am.

LAVINIA. Well, I never speak to strangers about my work. It's agin' the rules o' the union.

MRS. B. (R. C.) That may be, but I am talking to you, and I repeat that such cooking is a disgrace, and if it occurs again, you will pack your trunk and leave immediately, you understand—immediately.

LAVINIA. (C. *turning to* MRS. S.) Introduce me to this person. Introduce me, so that I can speak to her without breakin' the rules o' the union.

MRS. SMITH. (L. *surprised*) This is my aunt, Mrs. Billetdoux.

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LAVINIA. And now that I can speak to you without breaking the rules of the union, for I am as strict an uniontarian as any lady in this country. How dare you speak to me like that, to me as had ancestors in Holland before Americans were ever thought of. I'm a lady, I am. I'm a lady—or I'd slap your face.

(*Which brings a general move from everybody. Consternation.* MRS. S. *goes back of chair at desk* L.)

MRS. B. (R. *cor.*) General, General, are you going to stand quietly by and see me insulted by this woman?

(GENERAL R. C. *trying to pacify* MRS. B. *in pantomime.*)

MRS. S. *crosses.*

MRS. B. *crosses.* GENERAL *crosses.*

LAVINIA *crosses.*

LAVINIA. (C.) Woman! Don't you call me names. I'm a lady and don't you forget it.

GENERAL. (R. C. *up and down* R. *cor.*) (*Turning to* LAVINIA *in a very excited manner*) You must not talk so to my wife, or you will have to settle wiz me, wiz me, ze brave general.

LAVINIA. (L. C. *up*) I'll settle with you now and in any style you like. You can't bluff me, you parlevoo, frog-eatin' French foreigner, you.

(*General movement of excitement up and down stage. During the excitement,* SMITH *enters* C. SMITH *meets* LAVINIA, *who pantomimes that the trouble is with* MRS. BILLETDOUX. SMITH, *realizing the situation, laughs silently,*

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shakes LAVINIA'S *hand—to her surprise. He then pantomimes to* LAVINIA *"Watch me." Says to* MRS. BILLETDOUX *loudly, with assumed indignation)—*

SMITH. (C. *up* L.) What's all this row about? (*coming down stage* C.)

LAVINIA. (*up* R. *pointing to* MRS. B.) That person is tryin' to get me discharged.

SMITH. (*up* R.) And you refused to let her. Right, perfectly right. (LAVINIA *nods*)

MRS. B. (R.) I will not stay here to be insulted like this.

LAVINIA. (*up* R. *apart to* SMITH) Then I'll get the hundred, I get the hundred.

SMITH. (L. C. *to* MRS. B.) The next train leaves in twenty minutes. Shall I order the carriage?

MRS. B. (R. C.) Immediately. (SMITH *goes up stage to door in* L. 3)

GENERAL. (R. C. *aside*) I must not lose ze party like this. (*turns and calls to* SMITH *up stage*) Oh, Mister Smith! (SMITH *stops. To* MRS. B.) My dear, stay at least until to-morrow. (SMITH *rejoins* LAVINIA *who is* R.) You see, I have waited so long for this visit. And Marion, she would be so disappointed, would you not my dear? (*looking at* MARION. *Crossing to* L.)

MRS. S. (*extreme* R.) Of course I should. What would the neighbors think, I couldn't hear of having you go.

LAVINIA. (C. *up. To* SMITH) I don't get the hundred. I lose twenty-five dollars right here.

MRS. B. (*crosses* L. *to* MRS. S. GENERAL *goes up stage and drops down* L.) Well, dear, for your sake, I will stay until to-morrow, but unless there is a change in several directions (*looks at* LAVINIA *and* SMITH) I shall certainly go home then.

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LAVINIA. (*going to door in partition. To* MRS. S.) If you don't want me for anything else, ma'am, I'll go back to my work.

MRS. S. (L.) That's all, Lavinia, that's all. (*waving* LAVINIA *out.* LAVINIA *opens door*)

SMITH. (R. C.) That's all, Lavinia. Go back to your work.

(MRS. B., MRS. S. *and* GENERAL *meet* L. *At the same time* LAVINIA, *who has gone into smoking-room, beckons* MR. SMITH, *who follows her and closes door after him.*)

LAVINIA. Everything seems to be coming our way.

SMITH. (*takes* LAVINIA'S *hands, laughs, swings her around* L.) You're doing nobly. Of course, I had to make a pretense of enjoying that luncheon, but the truth is I couldn't eat a thing.

LAVINIA. (L.) I'd thought of that, sir, and I've got the finest little meal ready for you that you ever tasted, and will serve it in here.

SMITH. (R.) If you were a man, you'd be a second Napoleon. (*exit* R.)

(*Bus.* GENERAL. LAVINIA *laughs, chuckles, makes a gesture and dashes through the door* R.)

GENERAL. (*leaving* MRS. B. *and* MRS. S. *goes to* C. *door*) I think I will go and smoke wiz me ze cigar, my dear.

MRS. B. (L. C.) But you will not leave the house, General!

GENERAL. Of course not, my darling.

MRS. B. (*coming up* C. *to* GENERAL) To be perfectly sure that you don't, I'll accompany you.

(GENERAL *in a dejected manner offers his arm to* MRS. B. *Both exit* C. LAVINIA *enters* R. *in smoking-room, places cloth on table, begins to*

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cut loaf of bread. MRS. S. *going up* C. *watching* MRS. B. *and* GENERAL *off, laughing. Enter* BOB L. 2 E. *followed by* ROSE.)

BOB. (L. C.) I hate to mention such a plebeian thing, Marion, but I had an early breakfast, and am feeling hungry. (ROSE L. *follows* BOB)

(*During this time* LAVINIA *cuts bread in silence in smoking-room.*)

MRS. S. (*coming down* C. *to* BOB) Of course, you know why I didn't invite you to lunch with me.

BOB. (L. C.) Because of aunt and your husband. But isn't there some quiet, convenient room where you could serve me a little meal—anything would do.

ROSE. (L.) Yes, anything.

MRS. S. (C.) Let me see. Why, yes, of course. (*goes to table and rings bell. Enter* ELSIE C.) Elsie, call the cook immediately. (*Exit* ELSIE E.) There'll be no difficulty whatever, and you can have your wedding luncheon just as all bridal couples should—alone.

ROSE. Isn't that lovely?

BOB. (L. C.) The very thing.

(MRS. S., BOB *and* ROSE *converse in pantomime.*)

LAVINIA. (*looking towards door* R.) Who's there?

ELSIE. Mrs. Smith wants to see you right away.

LAVINIA. All right. I'll come.

(LAVINIA *folds bread up in cloth, places it in fireplace* R.)

ELSIE. (*entering* C.) She's coming, ma'am. (ELSIE *exits* C.)

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BOB. (L. C.) You're sure there'll be no danger?

MRS. S. (C.) Quite sure. I'll be careful for my own sake as well as yours. (*Enter* LAVINIA *through door in partition from den.* ROSE *sits* L., BOB *goes to her. To* LAVINIA) Lavinia, this lady and gentleman are going to stay to luncheon and I would like to have it served in my husband's den.

LAVINIA. In there?

MRS. S. (C.) Yes. (LAVINIA *looks disturbed*) What's the matter?

LAVINIA. (R. C.) I don't think I can do it, ma'am. Servin' lunches in dins is agin the rules of the union.

MRS. S. (C.) Very well, then. I'll do it myself. (*crossing* L. *to* ROSE *and* BOB)

LAVINIA. (R.) On second thought, ma'am, I'll accommodate you.

MRS. S. That's very kind of you. But they are hungry, so please don't wait.

LAVINIA. Why not let them eat in the kitchen?

ROSE. (L. *cor., rising*) Eat in the kitchen!

MRS. S. *crosses.* LAVINIA *crosses.* ROSE *crosses.*

BOB. (L. C. *starts to cross to* LAVINIA. MRS. SMITH *stops him with a gesture*) The idea!

LAVINIA. (R.) Well, you needn't be so huffy about it. Just as good people as you eat there. As I said before (*to* MRS. SMITH) why not let them eat in the kitchen?

MRS. S. (C.) No, no. It is quite out of the question.

BOB. (L. C.) Of course it is.

ROSE. (L. C.) I should say so.

MRS. S. (*impatiently*) In there, Lavinia, (*pointing to door*) as I said before. In there.

LAVINIA. (*goes to door leading into den*) Very

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well, ma'am, very well. (*opens door, goes into den, shuts door after her*) There's going to be trouble. I feel it in my bones. (*Exit* R. 3)

MRS. S. (*going to door* R. *opening it*) You can wait in here until she returns. (BOB *and* ROSE *pass in, close door and embrace.*)

MRS. S. (*opening door suddenly, discovers* BOB *and* ROSE *embracing.* MRS. SMITH *crosses over to* L. *and sits at desk*) Ah, be careful not to make any noise. (BOB *and* ROSE *sit,* ROSE *at* L. *of table and* BOB *at* R. *in den*)

BOB. What a funny wedding day. I'm really hungry.

ROSE. So am I. I do hope she won't be long.

(MRS. B. *and* MISS S. *enter from* R. C.)

MRS. B. (R. *coming down* R. C.) Marion, have you heard the news?

MISS S. *crosses.* MRS. B. *crosses.* MRS. S. *crosses.*

MRS. S. (*at desk*) No.

MRS. B. (R.) Why Miss Smith tells me that——!

MISS S. (*coming down* C.) Let me tell her. I am to be married to Count Von Guggenheim. What do you think of that?

MRS. S. My dear Juliette, you really ought to see a specialist. This is your second Guggenheim attack to-day.

MISS S. (C.) Be as skeptical and sarcastic as you please. The fact remains, nevertheless, that I am to be a Countess.

MRS. B. (R. C.) She says that the Count proposed to your husband for her hand in the most formal style this afternoon.

MISS S. (C.) And is coming for his answer to-night.

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MRS. S. (*rising, going down* L.) John told you that?

MISS S. (R.) He did.

MRS. S. (L.) I'll have to speak to John. His sense of humor is becoming altogether too obstreperous.

MISS S. (*advancing to* MRS. S.) Then you don't believe it?

MRS. S. (*crossing* R.) Why should I? I know the size of your bank balance, and the Count's eyesight is still good.

(MRS. S. *crosses to* MRS. B. R. C.)

MISS S. (L. C.) I might have expected this. But I shall repay you for everything some day, for let me tell you—Mrs. Smith

(MRS. SMITH, C. *bowing*)

When I'm married to the Count, you won't be able to get your nose inside my door, no indeed, not even with the aid of a crowbar. (*Exit* L. 2)

MRS. S. (*coming* C.) It must be awful to wake up after such a lovely dream.

(*Enter* ELSIE C. *from* L. *with letter which she hands to* MRS. SMITH. ELSIE *exits same.*)

ELSIE. A letter for you, ma'am.

MRS. S. (L. C. *opening letter*) From the intelligence office. I sent word I should want a new maid to take Julia's place.

MRS. B. (R. C.) A sensible idea.

MRS. S. (C.) There's a girl waiting who they think will just suit. Shall we go to see her?

MRS. B. (R.) Yes, dear, but be very careful in your selection this time.

MRS. S. (*crossing to* L. 3) Indeed I will.

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(MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. *exit* L. 3.)

BOB. (*rising and passing back of table in den*) I wonder where that girl is. I can't stand this indefinite postponement of meal time.

ROSE. (L. *of table*) But what can you do?

BOB. (R.) I've got to do something. (*discovers table-cloth at fireplace* R. *containing bread. Stoops down and examines it*) A find! (*Then picks it up and places it on the table. Gives a large piece of bread to* ROSE, *takes another piece and sits* R. *of table. They each take a bite laughingly, and look at each other. Go to take a second bite, look disgusted*)

ROSE. A wedding luncheon. (*holding bread up and looking at* BOB)

(BOB *goes up and throws bread in fireplace.*)

ROSE. Take mine, too, I am not selfish.

(BOB *throws this also in fireplace.*)

BOB. I'm going to find that cook.

ROSE. But your aunt.

BOB. I'd rather meet aunty than starve to death. You stay here, dear. (*starts for door* R. *in den*)

ROSE. (C. *rising*) Alone?

BOB. (*coming back of chair to* ROSE) There's nothing to be afraid of.

ROSE. But I'd rather not.

BOB. (*placing her down in chair*) There, there. Don't worry. I'll be back in a minute or so. (BOB *exits* R. *from den*)

(SMITH *and* GENERAL *enter* C. *from* R. SMITH *motioning* GENERAL *to keep quiet.*)

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GENERAL. (L.) I am very hungry, when am I to have something to eat?

SMITH. (C.) Don't ask any questions, General. Be satisfied with getting it, and remember you'd go hungry all day if I didn't know that you were a good fellow and would say nothing about it.

GENERAL. (C.) But where is it?

SMITH. (L.) In here all by ourselves.

(*Opening door to den.* SMITH *and* GENERAL *enter den.* GENERAL *enters first, crosses down* R. SMITH *sees* ROSE *and starts.*)

SMITH. Confound it! We've got to get this girl out of here. (*goes to table to* ROSE) I beg your pardon but we need this room for a few minutes. Would you oblige me by going in there. (*indicating room* L.) I said, would you oblige me——! (*to* GENERAL) Oh, confound it, I forgot. She doesn't understand English.

GENERAL. (*down* R. *cor.*) Doesn't understand?

SMITH. (R. C.) No. Came here this morning with her brother. How are we going to get her out of here. (*very sharply to* ROSE) Get out of here! (ROSE, *without looking at* SMITH, *starts and shows indignation*) (*to* GENERAL) I wonder if she understands the sign language?

(*Approaches* ROSE, *attracts her attention by striking table, then motions for her to leave room.* ROSE *smiles, pretending she does not understand.* LAVINIA *enters during business, goes to head of table.* SMITH'S *hand as he makes motions to* ROSE *just misses* LAVINIA'S *face, causing her to draw back her hand.* SMITH *turns to* ROSE, *pantomimes for her to go in the other room.*)

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LAVINIA. (C. *imitates* SMITH'S *Bus.*) What game are you playing? (*stare bus.*)

SMITH. (R. C.) How are we going to get this girl out of here?

LAVINIA. Easy enough. I'll tell her to move.

SMITH. (R.) But she doesn't understand English.

LAVINIA. (*laughs*) Oh, this is a good joke. (*to* ROSE) He says you don't understand English. (*grin bus.*) (ROSE *smiles vacantly.* LAVINIA'S *grin slowly changes to a look of surprise*) Oh, what's the matter with you?

GENERAL. She does not know.

LAVINIA. (C.) (*to* GENERAL. *Scowl and grin bus.*) But I heard her speaking in there (*to* ROSE) Didn't I hear you say you wouldn't eat in the kitchen? (ROSE *pretends she does not understand*)

SMITH. (R. C.) You're simply mistaken.

LAVINIA. (C.) Well, when I know a thing, I know it, and I heard——!

(*Enter* BOB R., *sees* LAVINIA *and tries to exit* R. LAVINIA *stops him.*)

LAVINIA. (*turning to* BOB) Here, young man, they're trying to tell me she doesn't understand English.

BOB. (R. *cor. By the door* R.) Si Signora datta righta! She no speaka English. I speaka putta bad. She not speaka him at alla.

(*Crossing* L. *goes back of* ROSE'S *chair.* ROSE *takes his hand and shows amusement.* LAVINIA *crosses to* SMITH *astonished*)

LAVINIA. (C. *to* SMITH) Is this real, or am I dreaming.

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SMITH. (R.) It's real, of course. This is Signor Damfano, Mrs. Smith's Italian music master, and this is his sisterino. (LAVINIA *stares from one to the other*)

LAVINIA. (C.) An Italian. Why, I heard them both speaking just as good as you can.

SMITH. You're simply mistaken.

LAVINIA. (*to* ROSE) I beg pardon, ma'am, but I want to set myself right. Didn't you say you wouldn't eat in the kitchen? (ROSE *smiles vacantly*)

SMITH. You see you're wrong, so what's the use talking about it. Get everything ready to bring in, and leave them to me. General, you help Lavinia.

(GENERAL, *bowing tc* SMITH, *goes to door, bows to* LAVINIA, *asking her to go first in pantomime.* LAVINIA *declines, motions to* GENERAL *to go first and* GENERAL *exits.* LAVINIA *turns and looks at* ROSE *and* BOB *and then exits.*)

(SMITH *goes up to door leading to room* L.)

(ROSE *gets up from chair, goes* R. *of table.*)

SMITH. (*to* BOB) I beg your pardon, Signor, but we need this room for a few minutes. Would you oblige me by stepping into the other room. (*indicating room* L.)

BOB. (*back of table*) Butta your wifea, she tella me to waita in dis a one.

SMITH. (L.) That's all right. But I tell you to wait in data one. (*opens door*)

(BOB *passes through door and motions for* ROSE *to follow.*)

BOB. (C.) But then I notta getta——!

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SMITH. (C.) You shall get everything that's coming to you. Go right in there if you please. (ROSE *crosses in front of* SMITH *into door.* BOB *takes* ROSE *and leads her* L.) Make yourself perfectly at home. You'll find the chairs very comfortable.

(SMITH *closes door, turns and beckons for* LAVINIA. LAVINIA *enters* R. *with tray, followed by* GENERAL. SMITH *indicates chair on* L. *for* GENERAL. LAVINIA *places lunch on table.* SMITH *occupies chair* R. *of table.*)

BOB. (*in room* L.) Find the chairs very comfortable! As though we could eat chairs!

ROSE. (C. *Bus.*) I shall cry pretty soon.

BOB. (L.) Don't. Please don't, that would be the last straw. (*embraces* ROSE. *There is a rattle of dishes in den*) I heard dishes rattle in there, and I smell real food. (*tries to look through keyhole.* BOB *places chair close to table near door, stepping on table, looks through transom over the door of den.* SMITH *and* GENERAL *have just seated themselves, and are eating*) They are eating our lunch.

ROSE. What!

BOB. They are eating our lunch. (*looks again*) Cold ham! (*looks through transom*) Sardines! (*looks towards* R. *and then through transom again and then at* ROSE) Cold chicken! (*between each article* BOB *describes* ROSE *makes the exclamation, "Oh!"*)

ROSE. (L.) Don't.

BOB. (*looking through transom again*) Charlotte Russe!

ROSE. Please don't. (BOB *gets down from table*)

BOB. (*crossing to* ROSE) It's a shame—I'll never forgive Smith, never!

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ROSE. Compelled to go hungry on one's wedding day. This is worse than being stranded with an opera company. (*sits on sofa* L.)

(BOB *looks at* ROSE, *then goes determinedly to door and raps on it.* SMITH *pantomimes the* GENERAL *to be silent, exchanges glances with* LAVINIA *and* GENERAL *then pantomimes to* LAVINIA *to find out who is in the room. She replies in pantomime indicating "Yes, I will."* LAVINIA *goes to door.*)

LAVINIA. Who's there?

BOB. (*at door* R. *of* L. *room*) Signor Damiano!

SMITH. What do you want?

BOB. We wanta eatta lunch with you.

SMITH. (R. *of table seated*) He wants to join us. How's that for nerve?

GENERAL. (L. *of table seated*) I nevaire did hear anything like it, nevaire.

LAVINIA. (C.) These foreigners is certainly the limit.

(BOB *raps loudly on door,* SMITH *rises, motions* LAVINIA *aside, crosses to door, opens door*)

SMITH. Young man, what do you think this house is—a restaurant.

BOB. I hava breakfast early dissa morning.

SMITH. I did the same, so there's no advantage at the post.

BOB. But I hava notta eaten sinca den.

SMITH. Neither have I. That's even at the half.

BOB. And I am a hungry.

SMITH. Same here. We're neck and neck in the stretch.

BOB. But I have no food.

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SMITH. I have, so I win.

(SMITH *closes door, goes down to table,* GENERAL *reaches his hand,* SMITH *grasps it and shakes it heartily.* SMITH *returns, opens door immediately.*)

SMITH. Another thing, I don't know what you're hanging round here for anyway. One might almost imagine you thought you'd come here to stay.

BOB. We know we notta going to stay.

SMITH. And I know it, too, so take a friendly tip, and go back home to mother.

(SMITH *slams door again, locks it and sits down at table.* LAVINIA *exits* R. GENERAL *helping* SMITH *to chicken.*)

BOB. (*looking at* ROSE) Go back home to mother!

ROSE. (L.) I almost wish I could. (*shows symptoms of crying*)

BOB. (L. C. *Taking* ROSE *in his arms*) Don't cry, Rose. Please don't cry.

ROSE. I'll try not to.

MRS. B. (R. *outside*) The idea of sending such a girl. It's simply preposterous.

BOB. (*looking astonished*) That's aunt. Come, Rose, she mustn't see me. (BOB *and* ROSE *exit quickly* L. 2)

(MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. *enter at the same time,* L. 3 E.)

MRS. S. (*coming down* C.) And had never worked anywhere before, and came simply because they told her it was an easy place.

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MRS. B. (R.) That should not surprise you. She was the average pleasant, intelligent and reliable girl.

SMITH. (*in den*) Well, General, how do you like it?

GENERAL. Oh, it is good, it is very good. (*The General makes an ejaculation as though he had bitten his tongue*)

SMITH. For heaven's sake, keep quite. You'll rouse the whole house.

GENERAL. But my teeth—my teeth—they step on my tongue.

MRS. B. (*listening, looking towards door. Pointing to door of den.*) There's some one in there.

MRS. S. (L.) (*aside*) Bob and Rose.

MRS. B. (R.) Don't you hear a noise.

MRS. S. (C). I—I don't think so.

MRS. B. (*going towards door leading to den,* MRS. S. *trying to detain* MRS. B.) Well; I did.

MRS. S. Don't go! Don't go!

MRS. B. (R. C.) Why not?

MRS. S. (C.) Because I didn't hear anything, and so there can't be anyone there.

MRS. B. (R.) Then where's the harm in my looking?

MRS. S. (C.) But I—I may be mistaken, and it might be burglars.

MRS. B. (R. C.) Burglars!

MRS. S. (C.) Yes. Last night they broke in next door and stole everything except the piano, the cat, and bird cage.

(*Enter* LAVINIA *from door* R. *with plate of bread.*)

MRS. B. (R.) Did you notify the policeman?

MRS. S. (C.) No. You see, he's an awfully nice man with a large family, and we didn't want

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him to get into trouble. Come, Auntie (*taking* MRS. B. *by the arm as if to lead her away*)

MRS. B. (*releasing herself*) No, indeed. I am going to investigate. (*goes to door* R., *looks through keyhole.* LAVINIA, GENERAL *and* SMITH *pantomiming.* MRS. SMITH *looks alarmed*)

MRS. S. Poor Bob, I did the best I could.

(MRS. B. *mounts table, looks through transom, while at the same time* BOB *and* ROSE *appear at door* L. 2 *and snap fingers to attract* MRS. SMITH'S *attention.* MRS. SMITH *turns and sees* BOB *and* ROSE.

MRS. S. (*in undertone*) Go back, go back. (*to* BOB *and* ROSE. *They both exit* L. 2.)

(MRS. B. *up on table looks through transom and beckons for* MARION *to come over and see.*)

MRS. S. Is it burglars?

MRS. B. (*getting down from table*) No, it is your husband and the General, and they are eating.

MRS. S. (C.) Eating!

MRS. B. Yes, and that cook is waiting on them.

(MRS. SMITH *pushes* MRS. B. *up stage and mounts table, looks over transom, then motions for* MRS. B. *to go to the door.*)

MRS. S. Hush, it's a conspiracy.

(SMITH *motions* LAVINIA *to take lunch off, which she does through door* R. *from den.*)

MRS. B. (*to* MRS. S.) What can we do?

MRS. S. (*above door*) Be quiet and overhear all we can.

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(MRS. S. *looks through transom and* MRS. B. *through keyhole.*)

GENERAL. And now I will tell you something because you are ze good fellow like me and will nosing tell like me.

SMITH. If it's anything you want kept quiet, General, you can depend on me.

GENERAL. (*still seated at table*) The servants are going to give a party here to-night.

(MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. *looking at each other.*)

SMITH. (L.) Here?

GENERAL. Yes, sure. Ze family go out, zen say have ze house all to themselves. It is ze good sing.

(MRS. B. *and* MRS. S. *look at each other and nod their heads.*)

SMITH. Yes, (*rising*) I should say it was a good thing.

GENERAL. (*rising*) And I shall be zere.

(MRS. B., *nodding, indicating "we understand you."*)

SMITH. You? (*Both come down in front of table*)

GENERAL. Yes, I have it all feexed wiz zat maid. She will be dressed (*describes dress*) as the night. The evening star in the hair. There will be no mistake.

MRS. S. (*looking through transom, then down to* MRS. B.) The old villain. We'll see about that.

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SMITH. (R. C.) You promised to go out with your wife.

GENERAL. (C. *in front of table*) Oh, but I will have ze headache!

MRS. B. (*to* MRS. S.) He little knows what a good one it will be.

GENERAL. (*to* SMITH) And you will be zere? (*rises*)

SMITH. I will be there without fail.

(*Hand-shakes Bus. for* MRS. SMITH *and* MRS. B.)

GENERAL. Capital, capital! I knew you were one of us after all, even if zat was ze mistake zis morning, huh!

SMITH. You don't seem to believe that.

GENERAL. I, oh—no!

SMITH. All right. Have it your own way.

(MRS. B. *goes to* C. MRS. S. *descends from table, puts table back.*)

SMITH. (*aside*) I'll see about servants having parties in my house.

MRS. B. (C.) (*to* MRS. S.) You heard?

MRS. S. I did.

MRS. B. What shall we do now?

MRS. S. Confront them.

(*Going to door leading in to den, rattles knob three times.*)

SMITH. (*with a look of surprise. To* GENERAL) After turning him down as I did, there's that damned Italian again. (MRS. S. *knocks on door.* SMITH *goes to door,* GENERAL *up* R.) If you don't get away from that door, I'll come in there and dust the furniture with you. (*back to* GENERAL. *An exchange of looks of astonishment between* MRS.

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B. *and* MRS. S. MRS. S. *knocks again*) I'll soon settle this. (*goes back of table, takes off coat, rolls up shirt sleeves, indicates to* GENERAL *what he will do to the Italian.* GENERAL *encourages him by saying, "That's right, put him out of the house, etc."* SMITH *throws door open*) Confound your impudence, I'll——!

(*Sees* MRS. S. *and* MRS. B., *closes door quickly, and motions for* GENERAL, *who takes hold of door knob, holding door closed. At the same time* MRS. B. *and* MRS. S. *try to open the door from opposite side.*)

GENERAL. Who is it, who is it?
SMITH. Your wife.
GENERAL. My wife!

(*Holding door closed. Motions for* SMITH *to take his place.* SMITH *makes quick exit laughing,* R.)

MRS. B. (*pulling at door, trying to open it*) General, General!
GENERAL. (*still holding on door-knob*) Yes, my dear.
MRS. B. (*still working at door*) Open this door, I say. Open it immediately!
GENERAL. I cannot open him, my dear. The table is on my feet.
MRS. B. (*holding the door-knob*) What did you say?
GENERAL. I say my feet is on top of ze table.

(MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. *with a vigorous pull open door, throwing* GENERAL *into the room and down* L. MRS. S. *holds door open with right hand. Looks at* GENERAL *and* MRS. B. MRS.

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B. *in pantomime threatens the* GENERAL. *At the same time,* LAVINIA *enters door* R. *comes through den and enters door between den and room* L., *sees* MRS. S. *and* MRS. B., *turns quickly, passes through door into the den.* MRS. S. *catches* LAVINIA'S *dress in left hand and closes door on it, thus holding* LAVINIA *prisoner.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE:—*Same as Act I.*

(BOB *enters* R. 2, *crosses* L. 3.)

BOB. (R. 2) I wonder where Marion is?

(*Enter* MRS. S. *from* R. 3.)

MRS. S. (*coming down* C.) Here you are.

BOB. (L. C.) What is left of me.

MRS. S. (C.) I'm awfully sorry, but this time I have a meal prepared where you can surely eat without being disturbed.

BOB. (L. C.) And this Paradise is?

MRS. S. (C.) The kitchen!

BOB. The kitchen! I won't complain. I don't care *where* it is so long as it *really* is.

MRS. S. (C.) I have an object in serving it there. My husband is going to attend a party which the maids give here to-night. I want you and Rose to watch him.

BOB. (L. C.) Oh, you're suspicious of hubby?

MRS. S. (*coming* R. C.) Not by any means.

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Any wife can tell you that there is a wide difference between suspecting one's husband and wanting to know what he does.

BOB. (L. C.) I'll remember that.

MRS. S. (C.) To do thoroughly what I wish you to do will necessitate your mingling more or less with the servants, and going in the kitchen will give you a chance to get acquainted.

BOB. (*crossing to* MRS. S.) Then, as I understand it, you wish us to attend the party, too?

MRS. S. (C.) If you are willing.

BOB. Willing isn't the word. We'll be delighted.

(SMITH *appears* L. 3.)

MRS. S. (*kisses him,* SMITH *starts*) But then you always were the loveliest brother.

SMITH. (*aside*) Oh! brother Bob!

BOB. (L.) But about Rose? I left her here and she seems to have disappeared.

MRS. S. (C.) Probably went to look for you. Come along, we'll find her and arrange details.

(MRS. S. *and* BOB *exeunt* R. 3.)

SMITH. (C.) (*from behind curtain, looking at them, coming down* C.) Oh, that's the brother Bob, is it? Why is he there masquerading in a band uniform, and who is the girl. Something for me to look into.

(ROSE *enters* R. 2 E., *takes sheet of music from piano. Sits* R.)

ROSE. Why doesn't Bob come back?

(*Sits in chair* R. SMITH *turns and sees* ROSE.

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SMITH *up* L. 3 *entrance, looks off, motions* GENERAL *to come on.* GENERAL *enters,* SMITH *takes him by the arm, brings him towards* C.)

SMITH. I believe that girl understands English.
GENERAL. (*up* C.) No.
SMITH. (C.) I imagine I can prove it.
GENERAL. (C.) How?

NOTE:—SMITH *plays this whole scene with burlesque seriousness.*

SMITH. By a bluff. Help me out. (*both coming down stage*) No wonder you don't believe it, but I saw him—saw that Italian music master kiss my wife. (ROSE *smiles*)
GENERAL. (*crosses* L.) Oh, what a villain! (*going* L.)
SMITH. (C.) Do you know what I am going to do? I'm going to kill him— (*looking at* ROSE. ROSE *is frightened*)
GENERAL. (L.) Yes, zat is right, kill him, kill him.
SMITH. I'll kill him so dead that the proverbial door-nail will seem as lively as a galvanized jack-rabbit. In there (*pointing to door* L. 2) you will find a gun——
GENERAL. (L.) A gun!
SMITH. A buom—buom gun— (GENERAL *crosses towards door,* SMITH *follows*) bring it to me, bring it to me, and I'll give you a magnificent illustration of a man booming business for the nearest undertaker. (GENERAL *exits* L. 2. SMITH *sweeps up stage. As* SMITH *goes up,* ROSE *watches him and rises as if to entreat him, when* SMITH *looks at her she drops back into her chair*) And to think that it should come to this, that all my happiness has been but a dream to be shattered by this rude

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awakening (*glancing at* ROSE) and that even into my little garden of Eden a serpent should crawl—(*coming down* C.) Oh, I can't bear it, I can't bear it. (*looking at* ROSE)

GENERAL. (*re-enters* L. 2, *with pistol, coming to* C.) Is zis se one?

(GENERAL *hands* SMITH *the pistol,* ROSE *looks alarmed—the pistol is a large, old-fashioned one with a double cock, and as* SMITH *cocks it before speaking,* ROSE *starts.*)

SMITH. (C.) It is not so large as I might have wished, but it will do. And now, General, I go to perform a sacred duty, to wipe off the earth a double-dyed villain who has been contaminating its atmosphere too long; my blood boils within me, my soul cries out for vengeance, and I'll have it, I'll kill him. (*starts toward door* R.)

ROSE. (*rising and catching his hand*) But it is all a mistake. (SMITH *and* GENERAL *laugh exultantly.* ROSE *fearful at having betrayed herself*)

SMITH. (R. C. *to* ROSE) Oh, so you not only understand English, but you speak it as well. Caught, my dear, caught as nicely as could be. And now, what does it all mean?

ROSE. (*stuttering and embarrassed*) He is your wife's brother. And having nowhere else to go came here. As Mrs. Smith's auntie came also she was afraid to tell you about it and so passed us off as some one else. (ROSE *goes to door* R.)

SMITH. (*turning to* GENERAL) Two more on me. Clear, General!

GENERAL. (L.) Perfectly, my boy.

ROSE. (R. *turns back*) What will they think of me when they know about this?

SMITH. (C.) (*going to* ROSE, R.) They needn't know. I won't tell them.

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ROSE. Won't you?

SMITH. No, I give you my word, and moreover, I'll take good care of you and Bob in the bargain.

ROSE. Will you? Do you know, I think I shall like you very much.

SMITH. (*taking* ROSE'S *hand*) And I am quite sure that Bob has shown excellent taste in the selection of my wife's sister-in-law. (*kisses* ROSE'S *hand*)

ROSE. (R.) Brother John!

SMITH. (R. C.) Sister Rose! (ROSE *exits* R. 2 E. SMITH *rings bell on table* R., *turns to* GENERAL, *laughs,* GENERAL *laughs, crosses down extreme* R. *as* SMITH *goes up to table* C., *places pistol on table. To* GENERAL) Did I carry it through all right, General?

GENERAL. (R.) Indeed you did, my boy, indeed you did.

(*Enter* ELSIE R. 3, *stands at table up* C., *at* ELSIE'S *entrance he assumes a semi-tragic pose, resting one hand on an upturned book, delivers speech very solemnly.*)

SMITH. Elsie, tell Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Billetdoux to come here immediately on a matter of great importance.

(ELSIE *exits* R. 3, SMITH *resumes natural manner, comes down to* GENERAL.)

GENERAL. (R.) What are you going to do now?

SMITH. (C.) I am going to give my wife a gentle scare, and incidentally give one to yours as well.

GENERAL. Splendid, splendid, but, my boy, you need not be *too* gentle with my wife. (*both laugh*)

(*Enter* R. 3, MRS. BILLETDOUX *and* MRS. SMITH,

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MRS. B. *preceding* MRS. S. MRS. B. *goes* L. *and sits in chair,* MRS. S. *comes down* R. *to* C.)

MRS. B. (*as she comes on*) Elsie said you wished to see us.

MRS. S. (C. *as she comes on*) Yes, on a matter of great importance. (*coming down* R. *to* C.)

SMITH. (C.) Elsie's mistaken. The matter is very simple. This morning I kissed your maid. I was able to explain. Less than five minutes ago I saw you kissed by your music master. I wish you to explain. There, that is all.

MRS. S. (L. C.) You saw him?

SMITH. (C.) Yes, my dear, I saw him, and now for the explanation, please. For, of course, you have one.

MRS. S. (L. C.) I can explain, John, but don't you see— (*indicating the presence of* MRS. B. *and whispering*)

SMITH. (C.) Pardon me, but I don't see. (*imitating* MRS. S.'s *gestures and whisper*)

MRS. S. (L. C.) I can explain easily enough, John, but not now.

SMITH. (C.) (*mock seriousness*) Let me understand the matter, please. (*winks at* GENERAL R.) I make this assertion in the presence of your aunt. You neither deny or explain it. What am I to infer?

MRS. S. (L. C.) Don't be foolish. When you understand you will know I am not in the least to blame.

(MRS. S. *goes up* C. *to window, stands with back to audience.*)

SMITH. (C.) I know that now, but the blame must fall on some one, and I'm going to place it

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where it belongs— (*to* MRS. B.) and that's on you, madam. On you! (SMITH *looks at* GENERAL, *who motions* SMITH *to continue and shows great amusement*)

MRS. B. (L.) (*looks indignantly at* SMITH) On me?

SMITH. (C. *of* R.) You took into your household a young and innocent girl. You were her guide, philosopher and friend. You instilled into her mind your ideas and your maxims. She was clay in your hands to be moulded as you pleased. And what is the result? Before the honeymoon is over, yes, even before it has begun, her husband sees her kissed by her music master. And now, madam, what defence have you to make? What can you say in extenuation of this conduct, the responsibility for which rests on you and you alone. (*triumphantly looking at* GENERAL. GENERAL *very much pleased, laughs at the situation.* MRS. B. *astonished, sinks into chair* R. *of table* L.) (*gloatingly*) Well, madam, have you nothing to say, have you no excuse to offer? (*shakes hands with* GENERAL C.)

MRS. B. (L. *in chair, looks at* SMITH, *but doesn't see bus. with* GENERAL) Well, I declare! Why should you——

(*Jumps to back of* MRS. B.'s *chair and breaks it on her.*)

SMITH. (L.) How dare you answer me. How dare you? (*Picture*: MRS. B. *in chair looking up at* SMITH *completely dumbfounded.* SMITH *at her* R., *left hand on back of her chair, looking down on her. Back again to* MRS. B.) Your husband, here— (*going over to* GENERAL, *slaps him on back*) Brave man as he is, willing to shed his life's blood in your defence when he can do so with honor, even

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he remains silent. (SMITH *nudging* GENERAL *with elbow*—GENERAL *very pompously goes* R. *saying "Silent." By this time* MRS. SMITH *has worked down* C. *without seeing bus. between* SMITH *and* GENERAL, *so as to meet* SMITH. SMITH *to* MRS. S.) You, I hold guiltless, and against you cherish no resentment, but you, madam, you I leave alone with your husband, your niece and a conscience which I should imagine would haunt you to your grave. (MRS. B. *starts, shows disturbed feeling.* SMITH *takes pistol from table* C.—*at the same time,* MRS. S. *joins* MRS. B., *who is seated in chair* R. *of table* L. GENERAL *watches* SMITH *all through the scene until he makes exit*) Yes, madam, to your grave.

(*As* SMITH *exits the* GENERAL *looks at him, waves his hand approvingly, turns down stage and laughs heartily.*)

MRS. B. (*crossing* R. *Seeing* GENERAL *laughing, rises from chair*) General! General! (*crosses to her* R. *of chair*)

GENERAL. (R., *stops laughing, looks at* MRS. B.) Yes, my darling. (*crosses up behind arm-chair* R.)

MRS. S. (L. C.) What is the matter with John?

MRS. B. (R. C.) That's just what I should like to know. But you did right not to deny it. The idea of his accusing you of such a thing.

(LAVINIA *appears at* L. 3, *catches* GENERAL'S *eye. As* GENERAL *sees her, turns, making quick exit* R.)

MRS. S. (L. C.) Absurd, isn't it?

(LAVINIA *comes down stage* C., *with letter in hand.*)

LAVINIA. (C. *to* MRS. S.) What is the meaning of this, ma'am?

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MRS. S. (L.) You can easily ascertain by reading it.

LAVINIA. (C. *reads*) "I shall not require your services after to-night." (*to* MRS. S.) Then I am discharged, am I?

MRS. S. (L. C.) You are.

LAVINIA. (C.) On what grounds?

MRS. B. (R. C.) Details are entirely unnecessary.

LAVINIA. (*faces* MRS. B.) In the polite society to which I am accustomed, ladies never put in their spoke until they are spoken to. Please remember that, Mrs. Busybody.

MRS. B. (*looking indignantly at* LAVINIA) General! General! (*looking surprised at finding* GENERAL *gone*)

LAVINIA. (*comes down*) Being a brave man, he skipped out when I stepped in. (*waves* MRS. B. *aside.* MRS. B. *goes to* L. *of table* L. *to* MRS. S.) Now, ma'am, please tell me why I am discharged?

MRS. S. (L. C.) For what occurred this afternoon.

LAVINIA. (R. C.) And what was that?

MRS. S. (L.) There is no necessity for any discussion. (MRS. B. *comes down* L. *and* MRS. S. *goes to* MRS. B.)

LAVINIA. (*crosses to* R.) Oh, there isn't, isn't there. We'll soon find out about that. (LAVINIA *rings bell on small table* R. *of piano. Enter* ELSIE *and* JULIA—JULIA L., ELSIE R. 3. LAVINIA *turns and speaks to two servants*) By virtue of the authority vested in me as secretary of the Cook Ladies' Union, I declare a strike in this house. (*looks at* MRS. SMITH) Now, is there any necessity for a discussion?

MRS. S. (*turns and speaks to servants*) And am I to understand that you two refuse to continue

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your duties? (*two servants stand with folded arms defiantly, then start as if to speak*)

LAVINIA (*up* C.) Ladies! Ladies! *I* am spokesman of this committee. (*to* MRS. S.) Not only will they refuse to do your work, but your milkman will not leave you any milk, your iceman will not leave you any ice, your drug clerk will not fill up your prescriptions, your coachman will neglect to attend to your horses, and so on, etc., etc., ad infinitum, ad valorem. (LAVINIA *folds arms defiantly*)

MRS. B. (*to* MRS. S.) What can you do?

MRS. S. (*looks crushed*) Nothing. (*then she recovers herself*) Lavinia, I have considered this matter, and you may remain.

LAVINIA. (*waving her hands at two servants*) That's all, girls, the strike is off.

(JULIA *crosses up* L., *exit* L. U. E. ELSIE *and* LAVINIA *exit,* LAVINIA *defiantly,* R. 3 E.)

MRS. S. (*going up stage*) What insolence! What insolence!

(*Bell rings.*)

MRS. B. If I were running this establishment——!

MRS. S. You would be just as powerless as I am. This is one of the many beneficent results of all being born free and equal. (*Exit* MRS. S. *and* MRS. B.)

(*Enter* JULIA L. 3, *followed by* COUNT.)

JULIA. (*crossing* R.) Please wait here, sir.

COUNT. (C.) Excuse me, excuse me. Have you

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some things heard by me since I from here was departured?

JULIA. (R. C.) Oh, yes, sir, I heard Mr. Smith tell his wife a very interesting piece of news. Some women are so fortunate.

COUNT. (C.) Ach! Go way mit you! But Mrs. Schmidt. What did she about it say?

JULIA. (R. C.) She said some things certainly were beyond the limit of our finite comprehensions.

COUNT. So? Was dat for me in my favor, yes or no?

JULIA. (R. C.) She meant that she couldn't understand *why* you wished to marry Miss Smith.

COUNT. (C.) Not understand! Und Miss Schmidt mit all dose loveliness! Ach mein gott, the jealousy of dose womans. (*goes down*) But it is always as it was.

JULIA. Yes, I've noticed that, sir.

COUNT. (*goes to* JULIA) Of course, for I can see you are a girl dat can much discrimination.

JULIA. (R. C.) Thank you, sir.

COUNT. (C.) Und now make haste so quick, say to Herr Schmidt dat I wait here mit myself to see him alone togedder mit me.

JULIA. I'll hurry, sir. (*going up* C.)

COUNT. (*following* JULIA *up* C.) Und say to Herr Schmidt dat I burn mit impatience—burn all up mit him, right from der basement up to der roof.

JULIA. (R. C.) I—I don't understand you, sir.

COUNT. What you call dot feeling when things so slow do go, what you want so quick to go! Dot feeling which made you burn all up in here—(*hand to heart*) in here on the inside of the outside.

JULIA. Oh, you mean impatience?

COUNT. (C.) Is dat him what I mean. No? Yes?

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JULIA. (R. C.) Yes, sir, impatience. Very well, sir, I'll tell him, I'll tell him. (*Exit* R. 3 E.)

COUNT. (*coming down stage* L.) Oh, I never like dis did feel before already, no, sir! All der blood what in my feet should be in und in my hands should be in, und in me all over should be in, is in my throat in.

(*Enter* SMITH R. 3, *going down* R., COUNT *taking stage* L. COUNT *is standing at table* L., *looking up stage. When he sees* SMITH *he strikes table quickly with each hand.* SMITH *is standing at* R. *of chair* L., *when* COUNT *strikes table* SMITH *jumps over chair and goes quickly to door* R. 2. COUNT *rushes over* R. *in great excitement.*)

COUNT. (*to* SMITH) Speak it out, speak it out soon what your sister did say, if you do not want to see me mit dot impatience explosion. (*crossing* L.)

SMITH. (R.) I appreciate your feelings, Count, in the matter. You need not worry. Everything is all right. (R. *corner*)

COUNT. (*going to* L. C.) Und she Mrs. Countess Von Guggenheim will be?

SMITH. (R.) She will.

COUNT. (L. *rushing over to* SMITH, *seizing his hand and shaking it violently*) Mein friend und brudder, mein friend und brudder. I am so happy —so happy dat I could sing mit all der strongness of my voice! (*turns up stage in ecstasy*)

SMITH. (R. C. *aside*) He must be hypnotized. Perhaps he thinks she's an heiress. (*to* COUNT) I suppose you know my sister hasn't any money.

COUNT. (*turning and coming down* C.) Money, what do I care for him. We Von Guggenheims

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are rich under your Astorbilts und your Vandergoulds.

SMITH. (R.) I am very glad to hear it.

COUNT. (C., *approaching* SMITH) But you by me have been so kind, is dere one thing more dat you will do?

SMITH. (R. C.) There's nothing I wouldn't do to help the good work along.

COUNT. As I this afternoon to you have told, I to-morrow sail by me for Berlin. If your sister would only—ach, but it could not be—she would not do it, she would not do it. (*goes and sits* R. *of table* L.)

SMITH. Don't you believe she wouldn't. What is it?

COUNT. (*rising excitedly and coming to* C.) If we could be married by each odder before I go, und we could sail away togedder.

(SMITH *is up* C., COUNT *faces him, little down* L. *As* SMITH *catches the full import of* COUNT'S *speech, he smiles extravagantly.*)

SMITH. (*up* C.) Sail away together. (COUNT *nods*) To-morrow?

COUNT. (L.) You have said.

SMITH. (C.) This is too easy! This is too easy!

COUNT. (*comes down* C., *facing* SMITH) You by me have been so kind—so good—will you not try und arrangement dis as well? (*holding out his hand*) Will you? Will you?

SMITH. (*going to* COUNT, *taking his hand*) Will I? In a minute. (*starting to* R. 3) Wait here. I'll arrange it and send her to you.

COUNT. (*follows* SMITH) But she will not do it, she will not do it.

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SMITH. (*turning*) Won't she? You just watch whether she will or not. (*Exit* SMITH R. 3)

COUNT. (*coming down stage in rapture*) Soon she will be here by me und I will speak mit her dose language of love. I my arms will put her waist around, den I will draw her to me mit der closest of nearnesses. When she comes I my hand will do dis—(*placing hand to heart*) I by myself will do dis—(*draws himself up to his full height—coming* C., *gleefully*) then I bow to her mit all my gracefulness. (*bows very low, facing* R. 3 E.)

(MRS. SMITH *enters* R. 3.)

MRS. S. Well, that is arranged all right. (*going to* R. C.)

COUNT. (L. C., *raising his hand, sees* MRS. S. *aside*) She is here, she is here!

MRS. S. I beg your pardon. (*starts to withdraw* R. 3 E.)

COUNT. (L. C.) Ach, do not go— (*starts towards* MRS. S., *seizes her hand—aside*) She is here —mein gott—she is here.

MRS. S. (R. C., *releasing herself*) But we have never been introduced, you know, although I understand you are soon to be one of the family.

COUNT. (C.) Mr. Schmidt, he has told you?

MRS. S. (R. C.) Yes.

COUNT. And it is all right?

MRS. S. (R. C.) Of course.

COUNT. (*going to* MRS. S.—*with great fervor*) Mein angel!

(COUNT *clasps* MRS. S. *in his arms and tries to kiss her—she struggles, finally releases herself and pushes him to the* L.)

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MRS. S. What do you mean by such conduct? How dare you, sir, how dare you take such a liberty? (*going to* R.)

COUNT. (*coming* C.) Is not dis dere place what I kiss you here?

MRS. S. (*back to* R. C.) No, sir, it is not. And let me tell you, if Mr. Smith knew what you have done, he would take great pleasure in providing you with one elegant high-priced marble tombstone.

COUNT. (C.) Tombstone? (*approaching* MRS. S.) But in Germany, I kiss by you, you kiss by me, I your hand do take und put in mine over under both togedder——!

MRS. S. (R. C.) Ah, that may be very proper in Germany, but in this country, all such tokens of affection belong to my sister. (*take stage* R.)

COUNT. (C.) By your sister?

MRS. S. (*coming to* R. C.) Of course. And another thing, it is her hand you must hold, not mine.

COUNT. (L.) In dis country, I must by your sister make love, under *her* hand hold by me?

MRS. S. (C.) Most assuredly.

COUNT. (*coming down* L.—*aside*) I did not know dis country was so dam foolishness!

MRS. S. (L. C.) As her consent alone is necessary, it is into her ears you must pour all your protestations of love——!

COUNT. (*going to up* C.) I refuse me to do it, I refuse me to do it.

MRS. S. (R. C.) Why so? If your course is prompted by love—as I am told it is.

COUNT. (*turning to her*) Lofe! In Germany I lofe by one hundred, one thousand womans, but take all of dose, roll it all up into one togedder, und dis time my lofe is one hundred times more bigger dan dose was it is—(*becoming demonstra-*

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tive) If I could told you what is in my heart in——!

MRS. S. (R. C.) My sister, Count, my sister.

COUNT. (L. C.) I do not like dose sister businesses! You are der one I lofe——!

MRS. S. (R. C., *indignantly*) Sir!

COUNT. (C.) You are der one I lofe—so, why should I to dat old woman explanation.

MRS. S. That will do, sir, that will do, I have heard enough. (*going toward door* R. 2) Mr. Smith shall learn of this. (*Exit* R. 2. COUNT *goes down* L.)

(*Enter* MISS SMITH R. 3.)

MISS S. Count! (*hiding behind curtains—picture*)

COUNT. (*turns and sees* MISS SMITH. *Aside*) Der old woman!

MISS S. (*comes down* C.) I feel so embarrassed. I never was in such a position before.

COUNT. (L. C.) I never was like dis situation eider.

MISS S. (C.) To meet you for the first time under such circumstances, knowing that you are going to make a declaration of affection, and knowing also that the heart to which you speak beats in perfect unison with your own, it is but natural I suppose that I should experience a feeling of perturbation, not unmixed, I will admit, with a sense of ecstatic exhilaration and rapturous diffidence.

COUNT. (L. C., *aside*) I never heard such speaking.

MISS S. (*turning her back to* COUNT *and holding out her hand*) Haven't you anything to say to me?

COUNT. (*seeing her outstretched hand indicates his own*) She knows about him! She knows.

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(*comes over to* MISS S. *and takes her hand*) I asked me Mr. Schmidt.

MISS S. (C.) Ah, but you haven't asked me.

COUNT. (L. C.) I do him now. Do you gif me my consent? No! Yes!

MISS S. I do. (*throws her head on* COUNT'S *shoulder takes his arm and putting it around her own waist, pursing up her mouth to kiss him.* COUNT *hesitates, looking disappointed*) Don't you know what to do now?

COUNT. Not in dis country. (MISS S. *purses up her mouth again.* COUNT *turns, looks at her a moment and turns away. Aside*) For her sister. (*then kisses her and walks rapidly to* L. *cor.*)

(MAJOR *appears in door* L. 3 E., *in time to see the* COUNT *kiss* MISS SMITH, *shows rage and exits* L. 3.)

MISS S. Now we will consider everything arranged, and I'll be ready to sail with you to-morrow. (*going up stage towards* R. 3 E.)

COUNT. You will leave by me to-morrow?

MISS S. Yes.

COUNT. (*aside*) Some more of dose sister businesses.

MISS S. (*up stage*) But I must ask you to excuse me now, I have so much to do to get everything in readiness, but I will be prepared to see you at ten o'clock. I am sure we will be very happy. (*sighs, exits* R. 3)

COUNT. (*goes up and looks after her*) We will be happy! I do not think she will by me be happy a long time yet. (*starts to* L. 3 E., *meets the* MAJOR, *who enters. To* MAJOR) Excuse me, but I wish out by here to go.

MAJOR. (*coming down* C.) A word with you, sir!

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COUNT. (R. C.) No, yes!

MAJOR. So, sir, I have found you, have I?

COUNT. (R.) No, sir. How could you find me when I did not lose me myself?

MAJOR. (*advancing towards* COUNT) You are the man who has robbed me of her love. (*pointing to* R. 3 E. *and referring to* MISS SMITH)

COUNT. (C.) You must think my brain is full of craziness.

MAJOR. (L. C.) But damme, sir, I saw you with your arm around her waist.

COUNT. Dat was for her sister.

MAJOR. Indeed, sir, indeed. I also saw you kiss her. Perhaps that was for her grandmother.

COUNT. (C.) Now I am in der grandmudder business.

MAJOR. (L. C.) I repeat, sir, you are the man who has robbed me of her love.

COUNT. (C.) I told you once more again, you are mistaken.

MAJOR. (*starting* L.) You equivocate, sir, you equivocate. (*turns toward* COUNT) You could not help loving her, I have loved her since she was a baby.

COUNT. (C.) You have lofed by her since she a baby was?

MAJOR. (*going* C. *to* COUNT) Yes, sir, I have sir, and until this afternoon, I had every reason to believe that my love was returned.

COUNT. Hush! Do not speak him so loud. If Mr. Schmidt was to know about dat he would for you buy one marble tombstone.

MAJOR. But Mr. Smith does know, and he approves, sir! (*starts up stage*)

COUNT. One moment. (MAJOR *stops*) You lofe by her, she lofe by you, and Mr. Schmidt he approves. No! Yes!

MAJOR. (*coming down to* COUNT) Yes, sir, he

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does. And now, once for all, have you any objections?

COUNT. No, sir! If Mr. Schmidt is satisfied, vat is the use. (*smiles and starts up stage*) Und now dat is all fixed I will go back by me to my hotel and den I——!

MAJOR. Don't move, sir, don't move.

(COUNT *comes down* C. *to* MAJOR. *Enter* SMITH R. 2, *goes* C. *to* COUNT.)

SMITH. Don't move, sir, don't move. (*picture*)

Cross COUNT. *Cross* SMITH. *Cross* MAJOR.

(SMITH *and* MAJOR *pointing to* COUNT.)

COUNT. (C.) Now I am in the moving business.

SMITH. (R. C.) So, sir, you came here thinking to make love to my wife, did you?

COUNT. (C.) No, sir. What for I should? I have seen the front side of her face.

SMITH. (R. C.) What do you mean by that?

COUNT. Why should I by your wife lofe be making, when I can der same do by your beautiful sister? (SMITH *sits in chair* R. *and shows amusement*)

MAJOR. (L.) So, sir, you do love his sister.

COUNT. (C.) (*impatiently*) Did I not told you. Did I not told you, Mein Gott in Himmil. Don't you not understand der English language?

MAJOR. (L. C.) Yes, sir, I do. You are the man I want, you are the man who has robbed me of her love.

COUNT. (C., *angrily*) I refuse mit you to conversation. (*turns and starts up stage. Turns back to* MAJOR) You make me so mad by you dat in one moment I—I—call you one lump of foolishness.

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MAJOR. (L. *threateningly*) Be careful, sir, be careful.

COUNT. (C.) What for of you should I be careful? You cannot frighten me mit your bluffings. (*goes to* SMITH) Dis man he insult me; so I will told you—I lofe your sister, dat is all right it is, but he—he lofe your wife, dat is all right not, it is. (SMITH *jumping up from chair*)

SMITH and MAJOR. Eh! what!

COUNT. (C.) He lofe your wife und say you approve mit it. Ach, if anybody by me say dat, I would take his head my hands between und twist it round und round und round. (*goes up stage*)

SMITH. (*crosses to* L. *to* MAJOR) Major Duncombe, did you say that?

MAJOR. (*indignantly*) No, sir, I did not.

COUNT. (D. R., *dropping down on* SMITH'S *right*) He say he lofe by her since she a baby was. Und now, go on, buy him der tombstone, buy him der tombstone.

SMITH. (L. C.) If I thought you did——

MAJOR. (L. *corner*) Well, sir, what then?

SMITH. I'd break every bone in your body.

COUNT. (C. *on* SMITH'S R. *urging him on*) Go on. Break it, break it.

(*Takes* R. *corner.* MISS SMITH, MRS. SMITH *enters* R. 3.)

MAJOR. (L.) You insult me by thinking such a thing.

SMITH. (*in an angry tone*) I'm not so sure of that.

MAJOR. (L., *same tone*) Ah, but I am, sir.

SMITH. (L. C.) I am not, sir.

(MRS. S. *going to* SMITH.)

MRS. S. (L. C.) John, what is the matter?

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MAJOR. (*crossing to* COUNT R.) I will tell what is the matter. I am going to thrash this interloper within an inch of his life.

COUNT. (R. *cor.*) And while him you do dat, I will be doing *what* at dose moments?

MAJOR. We'll see what you'll be doing, sir, we'll see. (*starts up* C.)

COUNT. (R.) Don't you think you can me make afraid. I am a Von Guggenheim. (*wheeling around*)

MISS S. (*coming down between* COUNT *and* MAJOR) Stand back, Major Duncombe, stand back. Have no fear, Count, I am here to defend you. (*putting her arms around* COUNT'S *neck*)

COUNT. (*crosses* C.) (*extricating himself from* MISS SMITH'S *embrace and crossing over to* C.) I do not want me mit your defenments. Leave me alone mit myself, and your arms tie around by your husband. (*indicating* SMITH, *who is in* L. *corner*)

ALL. Her husband?

MISS S. My husband?

SMITH. (L. *corner*) I am not her husband.

MRS. S. (L. C.) I am Mrs. Smith.

COUNT. (C.) Vat you are?

MRS. S. (L. C.) I am Mrs. Smith.

COUNT. Den who is my beautiful Miss Smith?

SMITH *and* MRS. S. (L. *and* L. C.) She, of course.

MISS S. (R. *corner*) I am, to be sure.

COUNT. (C., *indicating* MRS. S.) Mrs. Schmidt (*pointing to* MISS SMITH) Miss Schmidt—Lieber Gott, I have made them twisted!

MISS S. (R. *corner*) Yes, Count, I am your bride that is to be.

SMITH *and* MRS. S. Certainly she is.

COUNT. (C.) I can explanation. I see two ladies walking on the street with one anudder side

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by each. Mein friend, he told me they was Mrs. und Miss Schmidt, so what do I think. Dat you was Miss Schmidt (*pointing to* MRS. SMITH) and dat you (*pointing to* MISS SMITH) was Mrs. Schmidt. Do you not see, what else could I conclusion?

MR. *and* MRS. S. Then you thought——

MAJOR. (R. C.) And you mean——!

COUNT. One moment. (*goes over to* MR. *and* MRS. SMITH L. *with back to audience, joins their hands*) Mein friend and brudder, I by you gife up your wife. (*rushes over to* MAJOR *and* MISS SMITH R. *back to audience, joins their hands*) He haf lofed mit you since you a baby was, und I by you gife up your husband. (*goes back to* C.) By myself I gife up great thankfulness— (*bows to all*) und by all of you I gife up good evening. (*Exits hurriedly* L. 3)

(*The two couples stand hand in hand looking dumbfounded for a few seconds.* MR. *and* MRS. SMITH *smile—the* MAJOR *looks embarrassed,* MISS S. *shows signs of crying.* MRS. S. *laughs suppressedly.* MR. SMITH *also laughs.* MISS S. *looks up at* MAJOR *as if about to cry.*)

MISS S. (R. *corner*) Major!

(R. C. *Bus. of* MAJOR *puffs out cheeks looks straight ahead.*)

MISS S. (*withdrawing hand from* MAJOR) Major!

(*Exits* R. 2. MAJOR *looks at* MISS S., *expands chest, marches up stage with a military step, exits* R. 3 E. MR. *and* MRS. SMITH *laugh out right.*)

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MRS. S. (C.) He thought I was Miss Smith. (*going to* C. *laughing*)

SMITH. (L. C.) And he wanted to marry you—(*laughs*) and he wanted to marry you!

MRS. S. (C.) I don't see anything funny about that.

SMITH. (C.) Don't you? Well I do.

MRS. S. Well, I don't.

(MRS. B. *enters* R. 3, *carrying opera cloaks.*)

MRS. B. It's time we were going.

SMITH. All right. Yes, that's what I thought this morning. (*crossing* R.) I'll just give a parting pat to my hair, and I'll be back in a minute. (*turns*) *Au revoir,* Miss Smith. Wanted to marry you! No—Yes? (*Exits* R. E.)

MRS. B. (C. *coming down* C.) You seem very friendly.

MRS. S. (L. C.) To tell you the truth, auntie, I can't think John has been flirting with that girl—but I wish to convince myself just the same.

MRS. B. (C.) How can you do it?

MRS. S. (L. C.) Easily enough. As soon as I heard of this party here, I hurried to the costumer's where I found something very suitable for myself, and by paying double prices, I was able to have a costume hurriedly made to order for you. Both are now at Mrs. Flyer's awaiting our arrival.

MRS. B. (C.) Then the idea is for us to change at Mrs. Flyer's, come back here and watch for our husbands without their knowing anything about it?

MRS. S. (L.) Exactly.

MRS. B. (C.) What are our costumes like?

MRS. S. (L.) Mine is the Queen of Hearts, while yours is the exact duplicate of that which my maid is to wear.

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MRS. B. (C.) But the General may mistake me for her.

MRS. S. I should think that an excellent idea if I were in your place.

MRS. B. (C., *going towards* MRS. S.) Now I understand. You do me credit, my dear, you do me credit.

(GENERAL *enters* R. 3 E. *He has a handkerchief tied around his head, and his face wears a very woe-begone expression.* MRS. S. *draws* MRS. B.'s *attention to the* GENERAL.)

MRS. S. (L. *apart to* MRS. B.) Isn't he a picture? (*looking at* GENERAL)

MRS. B. (L. C.) (*nudging* MRS. S.) What is the matter, Pet?

GENERAL. (*going towards chair* R.) Oh, my head, my head. (*seated*) I am so sick, I am so sick!

MRS. S. (*aside, to* MRS. B.) Doesn't he do it well?

MRS. B. (*to* GENERAL—*looking at* MARION *and then at* GENERAL) I am so sorry, love!

GENERAL. It was all right until a minute ago—and zen it began to ache so much, so much.

(SMITH *enters* R. 2 *with hat and coat.*)

SMITH. (R.) Hello, what's the matter?

(GENERAL *and* SMITH *exchange looks.*)

MRS. S. (L. *corner*) The General has a most severe headache.

MRS. B. (L. C. *to* SMITH) Most severe.

SMITH. (*crosses to* C. *crossing to* L. *of chair*) Oh, yes, he mentioned it this morning. It's been coming on all day.

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GENERAL. (R. *corner pulling* SMITH'S *coat*) No, no, no. Just this minute. Just this minute.

(MRS. B. *and* MRS. S. *exchange glances.*)

(SMITH *showing consternation, goes up stage and puts hat and coat on chair.*)

MRS. B. (*crosses* R., *crossing back of* GENERAL'S *chair*) This is where the pain is (*pulling hair*) isn't it, you poor dear?

GENERAL. Yes. Zat is ze place.

MRS. S. (*crossing to* GENERAL'S L. *side of chair*) And here, too, with shooting pains occasionally. (*at the same time pinching with her fingers side of* GENERAL'S *head*)

GENERAL. Yes, that is it. Ze shooting pains, ze shooting pains.

MRS. B. (*crossing* L. *to* SMITH) See how perfectly we understand the General.

SMITH. (C.) Oh, it isn't the headache that is bothering the General. It is the fact that he cannot go with you to Mrs. Flyer's this evening. That is what is breaking your heart, isn't it, General?

GENERAL. (*still seated, very much surprised and pleased*) Yes, that just breaks my heart.

(SMITH *goes up stage to table.*)

MRS. S. (R. C.) Then we'll stay home and nurse you.

GENERAL. (R., *rising quickly, goes down* R., *turns to* MRS. SMITH) Not at all, not at all. I am seek enough to keep me at home, but not seek enough to keep you.

MRS. B. (L. C. *to* GENERAL) Are you sure you won't be lonesome.

GENERAL. (R.) I am quite sure.

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MRS. S. (R. C.) Then we'll take you at your word. Come, Auntie. (MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. *go up* C. SMITH *puts on cloaks of both ladies.* MRS. B.'s *upside down*) Come, Auntie. (*going towards* L. 3 E.) We are very sorry, aren't we, Auntie?

MRS. B. Yes, very, very sorry.

MRS. B. and MRS. S. Dear, dear GENERAL.

(MRS. B. *and* MRS. S. *exit* L. 3)

SMITH. (*taking coat and hat in hand, meets* GENERAL C. *up stage*) Everything all right?

GENERAL. Everything is beautiful, and you will come?

SMITH. I will be here without fail. (*aside, going toward* L. 3) I'll stop such proceedings in my house. (*Exits* L. 3)

GENERAL. (*following* SMITH *looks off* L. 3) They have gone, they have gone! Bravo! Bravo!

(GENERAL *takes handkerchief from head, starts to dance down stage* R. *and back again to* C. *where he meets* MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. *who have entered from* L. 3 E. *having seen him dance. Picture: The* GENERAL *commences to groan as if suffering from headache.* MRS. S. C. GENERAL *goes* R. *to chair,* MRS. S. *following.*)

MRS. S. (C.) What's the matter, General?

GENERAL. (R.) Oh, my head, my head, such a headache—oh dear, oh dear!

MRS. B. (L. C.) But you were dancing.

(SMITH *appears at door* L. 3 *and catches* GENERAL'S *eye.*)

GENERAL. (*falling into chair*) Wiz ze pain, my dear, wiz ze pain.

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MRS. S. (C.) That stupid Thomas hadn't the carriage round. I suppose it is ready now, but I really think we had better stay home and nurse you.

GENERAL. (*rising quickly from chair and turning to* MRS. S.) And keep you from Madam Flyer's? Nevaire! Nevaire!

MRS. S. (C.) We thoroughly appreciate your consideration. Be good to yourself, General.

GENERAL. (R. C.) I will, I will.

MRS. B. (*going up* C.) We should hate to have anything happen to you, General, before we get back.

MRS. S. Indeed we should——

MRS. S. and MRS. B. Before we get back.

(*Exit* MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. L. 3.)

GENERAL. (*going quickly to* L. 3 *watching them off*) Zis time eet is all right.

(JULIA *enters, comes down* C. *meets* GENERAL.)

JULIA. (R.) Have they gone, General?

GENERAL. (L. C.) Yes, zey have gone.

JULIA. (R.) Then I'll call the others.

GENERAL. (L.) But I have no mask.

JULIA. (*crosses* R. 3) Oh, that doesn't matter, I told them you would be here. We are not going to mask until later. (*going to* R. 3) Come in, girls, everything is all right.

(*At the same time* GENERAL *goes down* L. *to extreme corner. Enter* ELSIE, ROSE, BOB, MAJOR *from* R. 3 *chatting and laughing.*)

GENERAL. (L. *to* JULIA) But are zere not going to be any ozzers?

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JULIA. (L. C.) They won't be here for an hour or so. We didn't know what time the family would leave.

(MAJOR *and* ELSIE *up stage at table* C. ROSE *and* BOB *down stage at* R. *of chair.*)

ROSE. (*seated* R.) Where's Lavinia?
ALL. Yes, where is Lavinia?

(LAVINIA *enters* R. 3, *sweeps down* C., *taking full stage and standing* C.)

LAVINIA. (C.) Don't you worry about Lavinia, she's right in line. (*speaking as she comes down stage*) How do you like them, girls?
GIRLS. Splendid! Lovely!
LAVINIA. (C.) First time I've had 'em on. I feel so dressed up I don't know what to do with myself—I want you to look at the material. (*Bus. girls all go down stage and examine* LAVINIA'S *dress.* GENERAL *walks up back of table* L.) Those little tails is real ermine—the man in the store told me so. A great bargain, a great bargain. Paid 78 cents, marked down from $4.99.

(*Girls go back to position.* ELSIE *goes down left and sits in chair* L. ROSE *and* JULIA *back to their old position.*)

BOB. You don't say so.
LAVINIA. (C.) I do say so. I ought to know, I paid for them. Paid for my crown, too, and I think I've been done, it feels as though I had only half a portion. (*all laugh*)
MAJOR. (L. *coming down behind chair* R. *of table* L.) Why, the crown is all right, Lavinia.
ALL. The crown is all right!

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LAVINIA. (C.) Fine clothes makes a heap o' difference. With these on I feel every inch a queen.

JULIA. (L. C.) But what shall we do until the others come?

ALL. (*up*) Yes, what shall we do?

LAVINIA. (C.) Go right on o' course.

ALL. Good! Good!

LAVINIA. (C.) But first of all I want to call your attention to a new rule I am going to introduce before the executive committee at the next meeting.

ALL. A *new* rule. (*all stand up*)

LAVINIA. (C.) Yes, and this is it. No cook lady shall work for any other lady unless the said lady can produce a certificate of character from the cook lady who has just left showing that the said lady is a fit person for the cook lady to associate with, without losing any of that high standing in society to which a cook lady is entitled by the nature of her job.

ALL. Splendid! Splendid! Fine!

LAVINIA. (C.) This is a most important rule. A cook lady without a character is like a balloon. And why is a cook lady without a character like a balloon—because she's no good on earth. I am glad it meets with your distinguished approbation. As chairman of the entertainment committee, I calls this meeting to order.

(*If song is used, at the end of the song, all applaud —they encore* ELSIE *who comes up stage* C.)
(*Enter* MISS SMITH *from* R. 3. *At same time, all come to* C. *and congratulate* ELSIE.)

MISS S. (*coming down stage*) What is the meaning of this? What is the meaning of this?

ALL. Miss Smith.

(GENERAL *and* JULIA *exit* L. 2 E. BOB *and* ROSE R. 2. LAVINIA *and* ELSIE R. 3, *all hurriedly.*)

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MISS S. (*to* MAJOR) Again I ask, sir, what is the meaning of such proceedings in my brother's house?

MAJOR (L. C.) Only a little party given by the girls.

MISS S. (C.) And you attend it, you who only last night clasped me in your arms and swore that you would always love me, you who said that when absence obscured me from your vision, the world became totally eclipsed, you who vowed that in all the garden of girls, I was the one little rosebud that you wished to pluck and wear forever next your heart, and this—this is the faithfulness of man.

MAJOR. Faithfulness of man indeed. Did you not listen to my vows of affection and intimate that my love was returned; did you not tell me to put again to you the question to-day, and when I did, did you not throw me over for a blonde-haired individual, who instead of talking straight English, begins in the middle and then branches off both ways—"no, yes"—

(MAJOR *and* MISS SMITH *exchange looks.*)

The faithfulness of man indeed—(*taking* R. *corner*)—how about the faithfulness of woman?

MISS S. Well, I was wrong, I admit it, but I am not so much to blame after all, for no matter how steadfastly the compass of a woman's heart may point towards the man she truly loves, let it but come within the influence of a title, and it really can't help wriggling, just the least little bit. That is the way it was with me, Major. I had to wiggle, that is all.

MAJOR. If I knew that was all.

MISS S. It is, Major, it is. Will you forgive me?

MAJOR. (*taking her in his arms*) Will you do me a favor? (*going up stage towards* R. 3) Promise me you will say nothing about what is going on here to-night?

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MISS S. I promise.

MAJOR. All is forgiven and forgotten. Repeat those words that made me feel so happy last night.

MISS S. Oh, no, I couldn't.

MAJOR. But please do.

MISS S. Well, since you insist, I will. I think you are the loveliest boy, Willie.

MAJOR. (*taking her round the waist*) Oh, Willie!

(*Both exit* L. 3.)

(*Enter* JULIA L. 2 *crossing* C.)

JULIA. There, I managed to give the GENERAL the slip this time, and now for the girls.

(*Exit* R. 3—*Laughter off stage* R. 3)

(*Enter* MRS. S. *and* MRS. B. L. 3 E.)

MRS. S. (*up stage* C.) Did you hear that? Our husbands are in there.

MRS. B. (*up* L. C.) What shame!

MRS. S. (C. *up*) It's worse. It's a disgrace. But we'll show them that they can't deceive us with impunity. Let us join them and see what they are doing. (*laugh.* MRS. B. *and* MRS. S. *start for* R. 3. MRS. S. *stops* MRS. B.) No! John is coming! Go that way! (*pointing to* L. 3 E.)

MRS. B. (L. *up*) What are you going to do?

(MRS. B. *takes cloak and puts it on chair up stage* L.)

MRS. S. (*up*) Go in there. (*pointing to* L. 3 E.)

MRS. B. (*up*) What are you going to do?

MRS. S. Find out several things. Among others if that *was* a mistake this morning, and if he will flirt with me, not knowing who I am.

MRS. B. A splendid idea. Of course he will. (*Exit* L. 3 E.)

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(MRS. S. *stands in window back* C., *back to audience—throws off cloak as* SMITH *comes down. Enter* SMITH R. 3 *masked.*)

SMITH. (*speaking as he comes on down.*) They are in there drinking my wine. Drinking my wine, helping themselves. But I'll soon put a stop to this. (*turns and goes towards* D. R. 3 *intercepted by* MRS. S. *who is masked. To* MRS. S.) Hello! What is your little game?

MRS. S. (C.) I wish to get acquainted wiz you. (*in French dialect*)

SMITH. (L.) Excuse me, not this evening. (*motions her aside*)

MRS. S. (C.) Ah, but I have been—how you say it? Oh, yes—I have been keeping my eye on you, and your face—so handsome, and your physique—so magnificent—zey have made me want to know you ever so much better—oh, ever so much better.

SMITH. (*to* R. *of chair* R. *of table* L.) Then let me tell you that the wish does not awaken in my breast that spontaneous reciprocity which is—no—in other words, you have got the wrong man. (*crossing to table* L.)

MRS. S. (L. C.) Zat could not be possible, Monsieur, for I have seen you often and I recognize you.

SMITH. (*with mask on still*) Oh, no, you don't.

MRS. S. (L. C.) Pardon, Monsieur, but I do. You are Mr. Smith, ze master of this house. (*going to* C.)

SMITH. (L. *removing mask—looks at it, putting fingers through eyes of mask. Going to* C. *aside*) I knew that was a cheap one. (*to* MRS. S.) How did you know that?

MRS. S. (C.) Oh, I know many things you don't zink I know. For instance, you kissed Madam's maid this morning.

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SMITH. (L. C.) You know about that, too?

MRS. S. (C.) Everybody will know it to-morrow. Ze Cook Ladies' Union are going—what you say—oh, yes, are going to investigate it, and I am on the committee.

SMITH. (*going to* MRS. S. C.) I want to declare myself right here. That matter has gone far enough. Imagine how my wife would feel if she knew this was common talk.

MRS. S. (R. C.) Ah! Why should Monsieur care how Madam feel. Julia is very pretty.

SMITH. (C.) What if she is. There is only one woman in this world for me— (*turning back to* MRS. S.) and that is my wife.

(MRS. S. *starts towards* MR. S. *then checks herself.*)

MRS. S. (R.) Pardon, Monsieur, but if that is so, why did you flirt with Madam's maid?

SMITH. (C.) I did not flirt with her, I'd hardly spoken to the girl. I mistook her for my wife.

MRS. S. (C.) And you are not even fond of Julia? Not ze least little bit?

SMITH. (L. C.) She is no more to me than a statue in the library.

MRS. S. (R. C.) And you really love your wife?

SMITH. (L. C.) Love her! I adore her! (*back to* MRS. S.)

MRS. S. (C. *impulsively, strikes* SMITH *on back, exclaiming in a natural tone*) Oh,—John!

(SMITH *falls against table, recovering himself and recognizing the tone—looks around for his wife.* MRS. SMITH *afraid of discovery goes center and again assumes character of maid.*)

MRS. S. (R.) Pardon, monsieur, pardon.

SMITH. (C.) Of course I do, and I'd give any-

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thing in the world rather than have her know this silly story is floating about.

MRS. S. (R.) And if I could stop it?

SMITH. (C.) You could just about name your own terms.

MRS. S. Zen I sink I can.

SMITH. (C.) How?

MRS. S. You wait here, and I will return and explain. (*going to door* R. 2)

SMITH. (*sitting in chair* R. *of table* L.) And remember if you do, you can count me your friend for life.

MRS. S. (*at door* R. 2) I will remember, Monsieur, I will remember. He loves me, he loves me. I knew it all the time. Dear, old John!

(SMITH *looks round at her, and she makes hurried exit* R.)

SMITH. (*rising*) That sounded like my wife's voice? (*looks around, sits in chair, takes up book, pause*) She asked me to wait here and she will return and explain—she will return and—(*rising, going to exit* R. 3) Oh, no—it may be another one of those five-hundred-dollar maids. (*Exit* R. 3)

(MRS. B. *entering hurriedly from* L. 3 *comes down center.*)

MRS. B. (C.) My husband caught a glimpse of me and mistaking me for that wretched maid, is following me. I'll make it interesting for him.

(*Sits in chair* R. *of table* L. *puts on mask.* GENERAL *enters from* L. 3 E. *down* C., *looks about, sees* MRS. B., *mistakes her for the maid.*)

GENERAL. (C.) Most lofely and most beautiful, I see zat you are here.

MRS. B. (*charitable*) Oh, yes, I am here. (*imi-*

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tating maid) But what would your wife say if she knew of this?

GENERAL. (L. C., *very much annoyed*) Why speak of her at this happy time. Let us talk of something more pleasant. Zat kiss you promised me this morning.

MRS. B. But you have no *business* to kiss me.

GENERAL. My dear girl, I do not kiss you for *business*. I kiss you for pleasure.

MRS. B. (*angrily, aside*) I will catch him in the act. (*to* GENERAL) Well, General, as I have promised you a kiss, you may take it.

(GENERAL *advancing to* MRS. B. *bends over and kisses her.*)

GENERAL. What happiness! (*Enter* JULIA R. 3 E. *in time to see* GENERAL *kiss* MRS. B.) Who are you? (*to* MRS. B.)

MRS. B. Your wife. Now, what have you to say for yourself?

GENERAL. (L. C.) Nothing. I am deaf and dumb.

MRS. B. (L.) But I am not, I know all, see. You shall pay dearly for this. We leave this house now, this very instant, not another minute do we stay. Understand me, sir, not another minute.

LAVINIA. (R. 2) No fighting here, no fighting here. Oh, it's MRS. Billetdoux!

MRS. B. Who understands thoroughly what is going on and who leaves to-night. (*to* MRS. S. *who enters* R. 3) Well, what have you learned?

MRS. S. (R.) I have learned, Auntie, that John loves me, and me, alone.

MRS. B. (*crosses* C.) And I've learned enough to make me determined never to trust my husband from my sight again.

GENERAL. (L. C.) I am sorry for me. (SMITH *enters* R. 3)

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MRS. B. And to take him out of temptation's way I shall depart immediately, General.

(ELSIE *enters* R. 3, *joined by* JULIA. MR. S. C. *Enter* BOB *and* ROSE, *arm in arm,* R. 2 E., *seeing* MR. *and* MRS. S. *starts back.*)

SMITH. (C.) Don't worry, everything is all right, Bob.

(*Lively p.p.*)

MRS. S. (L. C.) And you knew?

SMITH. (R.) Certainly. (*to* BOB *and* ROSE) You can stay right here and the party may go on to the end. (*to* MRS. S.) Marion, our honeymoon has been delayed too long and we'll start on it right away.

MRS. S. (*crossing to* ROSE—*enter* MAJOR, MISS S.) But I can't go in this dress.

SMITH. Of course you can. Lavinia, bring Mrs. Smith's cloak. Julia, pack Mrs. Smith's trunks and send them to the Waldorf. Elsie, order the carriage immediately.

ALL. Are you really going to leave home?

SMITH. Yes, for a time at least, and if anyone should ask why I left home, tell them it is because I am in love with my wife. (SMITH *and* MRS. SMITH *exit* L. 3.—*Forte*) So long, Bob, ta-ta, Major. Good-bye, everybody.

(*All good-byes, etc.*)

QUICK CURTAIN.

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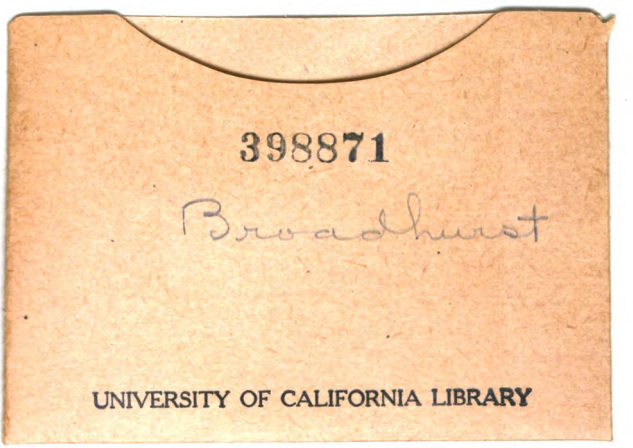

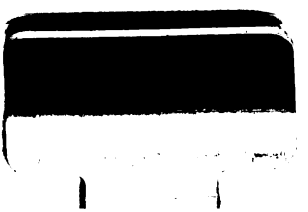

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